

## Chapter 1 – Dudley Disturbed

Privet Drive was a quiet suburban street with neat little houses side by side on opposite sides of the road. The lawns were manicured, the gardens well kept and the streets well maintained. None more so than number four, the residents of this home evidently took great pride in outward appearances and cared deeply for what others thought.

The interior of number four reflected the exterior, all the furniture was kept free of dust and dirt, the floors polished to a blinding shine and the sink was always free of dishes.

Dudley Dursley, the only child of Vernon and Petunia Dursley, was sitting at the kitchen table eating his breakfast while he read the Financial Times of London. He was a well-built young man in his twenties with black hair and a vacant expression.

As he finished reading the headlines, his eyes scanned the remainder of the front page, on the bottom right of the front page the picture of a young man, approximately the same age as Dudley was staring back at him.

“MUM, DAD! Come quick!” He bellowed at the top of his lungs.

Vernon and Petunia Dursley ran into the kitchen, half expecting to find a tornado had hit, but when they saw no damage, they just stared blankly at their son. Vernon, a short, overweight man in his mid to late fifties could stand the suspense no longer.

“What is it?” He asked in an annoyed tone.

“Look,” Dudley said simply, handing his father the newspaper.

Vernon scanned the front page; angrily searching for the reason his son had disturbed him, when he found it he fell backward into one of the kitchen chairs. Vernon had no words; nothing could describe the shock and anger at what he saw.

“What is it Vernon?” Petunia asked her husband.

Vernon looked up at Petunia, and without saying a word, he handed his wife the newspaper.

She scanned the page as her husband had just done, it took her less time to find, but the shock was even greater.

"Harry Potter," Petunia shrieked.

"I thought he was dead?" Dudley asked his father.

"That's what those people told us, I thought we were rid of him forever." Vernon said.

Petunia continued to read as her husband and son spoke.

"I can't believe he's man of the year." Dudley said.

"Did it say why?" Vernon asked.

"It said he donated a new orphanage in Scotland, it says it cost two million pounds." Dudley answered, still in a state of shock.

"Where did that boy get that kind of money?" Vernon asked to no one in particular.

"Dudley, you didn't read the entire article, did you?" His mother asked tentatively.

"No, of course I didn't, I called out for you." Dudley said dismissively.  
"Why?" He asked, taking a bite of his bacon.

"I think you should read the whole article." Petunia explained, nervously.

Dudley yanked the paper from his mother and began to read. As he read the article in full, the shock began to increase into anger and his face began to flush a crimson color.

"What is it Dudley?" His father asked.

"He owns my company." Dudley said in a state of shock.

"What?" Vernon asked, scarcely believing what he just heard.

"That's not all; it says here that he's in negotiation to buy your company as well." Dudley explained, handing his father the newspaper.

Vernon read the article, if Dudley's face was flushed crimson, Vernon's was literally smoking.

"Why that little bastard!" Vernon exclaimed.

"Vernon!" Petunia warned her husband.

"Petunia dear, according to this, we'll be working for Potter by this time next week." He said apologetically.

"I know, but watch your language." Petunia warned again.

"It also says that he's making visits to all his companies over the next month, by the time he makes it to mine, he'll own it." Vernon continued.

"What are we going to do?" Petunia asked.

"What can we do? We can't quit, we don't have time to find other jobs." Vernon answered.

"And I don't want to find another job, I make a lot of money, and I like the people there." Dudley added.

"Are you saying our family's going to work for a Potter?" Petunia asked disgusted.

"For now, Petunia dear, we have no choice." Vernon argued.

"But what if he sacks you both? We haven't been good to him over the years." Petunia added.

"He wouldn't dare, after we took him in and gave him a roof over his head, and three square meals a day, and clothes, and an education. No, I'm sure he appreciates all we did for him." Vernon said deluding himself.

"Oh give it up dad, you stuck him in the cupboard under the stairs, fed him scraps and gave him my hand-me-downs. We'll be lucky if he doesn't kill us first." Dudley argued.

"Oh Dudley, don't talk like that." His mother said shocked.

"Well I've got to go to work, hopefully the article was mistaken, if not, we're screwed." Dudley said standing.

"Dudley, watch your mouth." Petunia warned him.

"Oh shut up." Dudley added as he left the house.

"Vernon, there has to be something we can do." Petunia said, sitting next to her husband.

"I'll think about it at work today, we'll talk again at dinner." Vernon said, kissing his wife and returning to his bedroom to finish preparing for work.

Harry was awakened the morning of his twenty fourth birthday by his three children bouncing on his bed.

"Happy birthday daddy," his eldest daughter; Cindy exclaimed.

Harry opened his eyes slowly; he had been up late the night before discussing muggle events with the Minister of Magic; Arthur Weasley. He smiled at the site of his children laughing and bouncing about.

"Now, what are you three up to?" He asked pleasantly.

"Mommy said to wake you." Cindy said, falling on top of her father causing the twins to do the same.

"Whoa, you three are getting too much to handle." Harry said, hugging the three in turn.

"Happy birfday daddy," the twins; Arthur and Molly said.

"So what does mummy have in store for me today?" Harry asked his children.

"We're going to Diagon Alley, I got my Hogwarts letter." Cindy said, brandishing it in front of her father.

"Well, this is cause for celebration." Harry responded, rising up from the bed.

He crossed the large, regal-like bedroom to the dresser at the far end, removed undergarments, and walked towards the bathroom.

"I'm going to take a shower, tell your mother I'll be down in a few minutes." He instructed his children.

"Oh daddy, you know she already knows." Cindy said matter-of-factly.

The three children ran from the room and down to the kitchen where their mother was preparing a new clothing line for her company.

"Mommy, daddy be down in a minute." Arthur said importantly.

"Thank you sweetheart, now go see Winky for your breakfast." Ginny ordered.

The children sat opposite Ginny after they retrieved their breakfasts. Harry arrived a short time later.

"Good morning, my love." Harry said, lightly kissing his wife.

"And a happy birthday to you, my love," she retorted.

"What are you working on?" Harry asked, making himself a cup of coffee.

"Maternity wear, I think it's about time the company expanded." Ginny said distractedly.

"Ah, just like its clients." Harry joked.

"Hey now, what are you trying to say?" Ginny asked jokingly.

"Oh, not you of course; you won't show for months." Harry said sarcastically, remembering how large she was with the twins.

"Hey, no picking on the pregnant lady," Ginny warned jokingly.

"So I hear we're off to Diagon Alley." Harry said, taking a sip of his coffee.

"Yep, Cindy got her letter and supplies list. There's much more than when we went to school, I'm glad you established that foundation, a lot of people wouldn't be able to send their children without it." Ginny said very proud of her husband.

"What time should we leave?" Harry asked, taking another sip.

"As soon as you're ready, we don't want to be walking around when the crowds start gathering." Ginny said, knowing her husband hated the attention.

"I'm ready whenever you are." Harry declared.

"Kids, get your shoes on, we're leaving." Ginny said, gathering up her drawings, and rising from the table.

"I got you a gift, but it will have to wait until later." Ginny whispered to Harry.

"Trying to keep me in suspense?" Harry asked.

Ginny opened her robe to reveal the lingerie she had designed the week before. Harry stared open-mouthed at the sight of his beautiful wife wearing such provocative clothing.

"Great, now I don't want to go to Diagon Alley." Harry said, as she closed her robe.

"Now you'll be thinking of me all day long, maybe it's me getting the gift after all." She said in her most tramp-like voice.

"You will, don't worry," Harry said, as she waved her hand in front of her robes, and she was fully dressed.

"Let's go shopping," she announced as the children reentered the kitchen.

Harry picked up Molly, and Ginny picked up Arthur and the group apparated to Diagon Alley. They arrived at a secret room inside Weasley's Wizard Wheezes, that Fred and George had set up for the group to use.

The twins began immediately grabbing everything in sight, this was their favorite store.

"They are so like Fred and George." Ginny said to Harry.

When the twins had bags full of candy and joke supplies, the five vacated the store and ventured out into Diagon Alley.

They first went to Madam Milkin's for Cindy's Hogwarts robes, when they entered, Madam Milkin herself greeted them at the door.

"The Potters, welcome, welcome, what can I do for you all today?" She asked pleasantly, knowing full well how wealthy they were.

"Cindy's going to Hogwarts this year." Harry said simply.

"Wonderful, new Hogwarts robes then." She said, taking Cindy by the arm and leading her to the measuring stool.

"I'm taking the twins for ice cream while she's fitted." Ginny whispered to Harry.

"Have fun," Harry responded as he sat in the corner.

As Cindy was being measured by the magical tape, another group entered the store. The three looked rather large; the father was tall and broad and very muscular, the mother was short but very plump, the daughter was of average height but quite muscular for a girl.

Madam Milkin welcomed them as well, but Harry noticed not as warmly. The mother went over with the daughter, and the father walked towards Harry.

"John Jersey, everybody calls me JJ," the man said, thrusting his hand out.

Harry stood and took his hand, applying an equal amount of strength.

“Harry,” Harry retorted.

“Firm grip, I like that.” The man said, sitting down. “Is that your daughter?” He asked.

“Indeed, and it looks like they’ll be going to school together.” Harry added.

“Excellent, maybe even become friends.” JJ agreed.

“So what do you do?” Harry asked, trying to make small talk.

“Me, I’m a Dark Auror, one of the best.” JJ said, straightening up proudly.

“Sounds dangerous,” Harry said, knowingly.

The man began to talk about his work, Harry listened intently, trying to gauge what Ron’s troops actually thought of him.

Cindy was talking happily with JJ daughter; Kari, she looked and spoke tough, but Cindy found her very pleasant.

“So what house are you hoping for?” Cindy asked.

“I’ll take any, just not Slytherin.” Kari responded.

“Why not, my Uncle is from Slytherin, and he’s very nice.” Cindy said, not really knowing the whole story of Slytherin.

“Too many bad wizards from Slytherin, I’m hoping for Hufflepuff, Gryffindor or one of the new houses.” Kari explained.

“Not Ravenclaw?” Cindy asked.

“Nope, not smart enough.” Kari said.

“I want to be a Gryffindor like my mommy and daddy.” Cindy announced.

"Oh, your parents are Gryffindors, my dad is a Hufflepuff and my mom is from Beaubatons." Kari said as the measuring tape slapped her accidentally in the face.

"Sorry dear," Madam Milkin said.

Kari's mother walked out from behind some clothing racks to where the girls were. When she saw the two talking, she announced her presence.

"Bon jour," she said to Cindy.

"Hello, I'm Cindy, what's your name?" Cindy asked in French.

"You speak French, how wonderful, I'm Dominique." Kari's mother said back to her in French.

"I am pleased to meet you." Cindy continued in French.

"You speak very well, how did you learn?" Dominique asked Cindy.

"My father taught me." Cindy said, now changing to English.

"Ah, I see, is he French?" Dominique asked, now also converting to English.

"No, he just knows the language." Cindy explained.

"See Kari, you will be able to use your French lessons." Dominique told her daughter.

"And nobody will know what we're saying." Cindy added slyly.

"Absolutely," Dominique said laughing.

"All right Cindy, you are all set." Madam Milkin said to her.

"Thank you Madam Milkin." Cindy said, and then turned to Kari. "I'll see you on the train then." Cindy said hopefully.

"Oh yes, definitely." Kari agreed, and Cindy bade them both farewell, and went back to her father.

"It is certainly much harder these days, going international and all, but Mr. Weasley knows what he's doing." JJ was telling Harry as Cindy walked over.

Harry introduced Cindy to JJ, and was about to leave, when Kari and Dominique walked over.

"I understand you taught your daughter French." Dominique said to Harry in French.

"I most certainly did, I love the language, you have a Parisian accent." Harry said to Dominique in her native tongue.

"You speak like a native, and you know accents." Dominique said in English.

"I've had quite a lot of use for the language over the years." Harry explained.

"Mr. Potter, shall I charge your account?" Madam Milkin said, as she walked over.

"Potter, Harry Potter," JJ asked in awe.

"Yes sir." Harry said to him, and then turned to Milkin. "Just inform Gringotts, they'll take care of it." Harry said, making Madam Milkin smile.

"You are THE Harry Potter?" JJ asked again.

Harry waved his hand at his forehead, and the lightning bolt shaped scar reappeared above his right eye.

"The pleasure was mine." Harry said, shaking JJ's hand. "And you madam, enchanted." Harry said to Dominique in French as he kissed her hand.

"That was Harry Potter?" Dominique asked her husband.

"I guess so, but he seemed so normal." JJ said disbelievingly.

"Maybe he IS normal." Kari offered.

The two just looked at their daughter and shrugged. Was the famous Harry Potter just a regular person? They didn't know, but would definitely look for him at platform 9 ¾.

Harry and Cindy met up with the twins and proceeded to the bookstore to purchase Cindy's spell books. When they arrived, there was a crowd gathered at the counter, and a commotion that Harry chose to ignore.

They went around the shop gathering up the books Cindy would need for school.

"I'm telling you Harry, we never had this many books." Ginny told Harry as the last of the books were gathered.

"No, but maybe Minerva's having them teach more these days." Harry answered, now waiting at the cue for the cashier.

"Oh what is going on?" Harry said impatiently as he pushed his way to the front.

Harry saw three very small creatures arguing with the store's proprietor.

"I have as much right to purchase these as anybody else." The tallest of the three was saying.

Harry saw that they were elves.

"If you were buying them for your master, yes, but you're buying them for your offspring." The man argued.

"Come Merd, they don't deserve our patronage." The female said to the male.

"No, I want to buy them here, and he's going to sell them to me." Merd said emphatically.

"Oh no, I'm not." The man yelled back.

Harry could stand no more. "What is the problem here?" He said authoritatively.

"These things want to buy spell books." The man said in a disgusted voice.

"So, sell them the damn books, and let's get the cue moving." Harry said impatiently.

"But they're elves." The man argued.

"I don't care if they're trolls, sell them the damn books, or give them to them free of charge, either way, hurry." Harry said, raising his voice.

"Now see here, I will NOT allow house elves to buy spell books, I don't give a damn about any elf rights, in my store elves have NO RIGHTS!" The man screamed.

Harry composed himself for a moment, he knew the moment Minerva allowed elves as students, they would be met with prejudice.

"Perhaps I'm not making myself clear, either you drop your prejudice and sell them the books, or you WILL have a problem with the Ministry, the Dark Aurors and most importantly me." Harry said threateningly as his scar reappeared on his forehead.

"Harry Potter," the man said in awe as he took two steps back.

The elves immediately bowed to Harry like he was a god, and stood to leer at the proprietor.

"I'm sorry Mr. Potter, I didn't realize I was holding you up, of course I'll sell them the spell books." The man said in a frightened voice.

Harry stared at the man unblinkingly.

"I mean it would be an honor to let them have the books free of charge." The man corrected himself.

Harry turned to the male elf. "I apologize on this man's behalf; please accept the books as a token of his apology." Harry said reverently.

"No thank you Master Potter, I would prefer to pay." The elf said, throwing the Galleons at the proprietor and storming out.

The crowd parted in awe of the famous Harry Potter, Harry paid for Cindy's books, and left with his family in tow.

"Do you believe that man, treating that family like vermin?" Ginny asked in a disgusted tone.

"I hear it's been like that since the 'Elf Rights Act'." Harry said downheartedly.

"Well I'm going to talk to daddy, this has got to stop." Ginny said angrily.

"There's not much your father can do without looking like a tyrant, he can't change people's prejudices." Harry said, sounding like he had had this discussion before.

"Well there's got to be something we can do." Ginny declared.

"There is not Mistress." They heard a voice from behind them.

They turned to see the family of elves that had just been in the book store.

"I don't believe we've been formally introduced; I'm Harry, this is my wife Ginny, and our children; Cindy, Arthur and Molly." Harry said, taking the elf's hand.

"I am honored to meet the great Harry Potter, and the daughter of the great Minister Weasley. I am Merd; this is my wife Merda and our daughter Mirta." The elf announced.

"I see you use the old ways, the wife taking on your name in the feminine." Harry said knowingly.

"You know of our old ways? Well I guess you would, you are the greatest friend to the elves." Merd said.

"I hold the elf community in the highest regard; it was elves that fought along side me and my family in the Battle of Hogwarts." Harry explained.

"I remember the Battle well, I lost two brothers." The elf said sadly.

"I am sorry for your loss, but they died bravely, and to protect those that are now prejudiced towards you." Harry said, sounding more disgusted than even Ginny had ever heard.

"Your words honor me and my people." Merd said bowing. "And I see our children shall be attending Hogwarts together." He added, motioning to the two girls now talking excitedly about attending Hogwarts.

"Would you do my family the honor of attending my birthday party tonight?" Harry asked, getting a strange look from Ginny.

"There would be no greater honor than attending the birthday celebration of the great Harry Potter." The elf said, bowing again.

"Um, Harry, did you forget who'll also be there?" Ginny asked, trying not to sound like she minded the elves.

"It's about time the Prime Minister knew what I was." Harry responded.

"No, if would cost you your anonymity, than I must decline." The elf said.

"Nonsense, I've been meaning to tell him anyway, but the opportunity hasn't arisen. Besides," he added, turning to Ginny, "he'll figure it out when he sees your father there." Harry said smiling.

"Oh yeah, I didn't realize." Ginny said, and then turned to Merda. "I would be honored to have you in my home." She added.

Merda just stood there in tears. "Thank you Mistress." Was all she could spit out.

"Do you know where my home is?" Harry asked, as they started walking to the Apothecary.

"Every elf knows, Baron." Merd said reverently.

Harry smiled at being addressed by his muggle title, he motioned towards the Apothecary shop, and they entered together. With the girls becoming fast friends, the Potters and the elves spent the rest of their time shopping together.

When the shopping was done, they bade each other farewell, and parted ways. As the Potters were walking back towards Weasley's Wizard Wheezes, Harry met up with someone he had not seen, nor thought of in years.

"Viktor," Harry asked, somewhat recognizing his acquaintance.

"And you are?" He asked snidely.

Harry made his scar reappear, and Krum recognized him immediately.

"Harry Potter, how are you?" Viktor asked.

"Very well and yourself," Harry asked, taking Viktor's hand in greeting.

"Very well, thank you," he responded.

"I see your English has improved." Harry pointed out.

"Oh yes, I've been studying, I'm teaching at Hogwarts you know." Viktor said.

"No, I hadn't heard, what are you teaching?" Harry asked.

"I'm teaching Defense Against the Dark Arts." Viktor answered.

"Really, is that why you were down in Knockturn Alley?" Harry asked motioning to the alley Viktor had emerged from.

"Oh, yes, that's why." Viktor stuttered.

Harry surveyed him. "Have you met my wife Ginny? The Minister's daughter," Harry asked suddenly.

"Pleased to meet you," Krum stuttered again.

"And my daughter Cindy, she's going to Hogwarts this year." Harry said, now really surveying him.

"Very nice to meet you," Krum said, shaking her small hand.

Cindy said nothing; she just stared at Krum emotionlessly.

"Maybe she'll be in your class, I'm sure she would learn a lot watching you." Harry said, conveying no emotion.

"Um, yes, that would be nice. I have to run, much to prepare for." Krum said leaving.

"That was odd." Ginny said, as the family continued on to Weasley's.

"Indeed." Was all Harry said.

They arrived back at Lee Castle by lunch, Harry found the day quite full of surprises. He wondered whether they were all good, or bad.

That evening Ginny and the kids were preparing for Harry's party. Everyone in the old inner circle had been invited; they were expecting at least thirty people all tolled. Harry was ordered by Ginny to remain in the bedroom until he was called for. Harry obliged happily.

Ginny had the house elves working tirelessly on the celebration; she wanted nothing to go wrong and left nothing to chance.

By seven o'clock, the guests started to arrive. Ginny's parents; Arthur and Molly were the first to arrive. Ginny sent Cindy upstairs to retrieve the birthday boy. Arthur and Molly went into the Ball Room to await the other guests and escort them to their assigned seats.

Harry went to join Arthur and Molly in the Ball Room; he resolved to discuss the elf situation again with Arthur. By the time Harry walked in, several other people arrived.

"Happy birthday," the group exclaimed when Harry walked in.

"Thanks everybody," Harry said embarrassedly.

"You're getting old mate." Fred said, slapping Harry on the back.

“Real old,” George agreed.

“Yeah, but you two will always be older.” Harry pointed out smiling.

“We brought you some of our new chocolates.” George said, handing Harry a box.

“Thanks guys,” Harry said, opening and taking a chocolate.

The entire room froze when he did, everyone expected Harry to turn into some odd feathered creature. Harry just smiled at them, and took another chocolate.

“You trust Fred and George?” Charlie asked, surprised.

“With my life,” Harry answered honestly.

“I’ll be right back.” Harry said, anticipating the doorbell.

Harry walked up to the door, and the bell rang. Standing at the threshold was a well dressed man apparently in his fifties.

“Mr. Prime Minister,” Harry said officially.

“Baron,” the man replied.

Harry let the man into the entryway of the castle.

“Happy birthday Harry,” the man said, putting his hand out.

“Thanks Tony,” Harry said, taking the man’s hand.

“I wanted to talk to you before we go on to the party.” Harry announced, motioning towards the study.

“Harry,” Arthur called as he came out of the Ball Room.

Harry and Tony turned as one.

“Arthur, is that you?” Tony asked.

"Tony, I didn't know you'd be here." Arthur said, taking the man's hand.

"And I didn't know you'd be here." Tony retorted.

"Well, Harry is my son in law you know." Arthur explained.

"Ginny's your daughter? I should have known, with that hair." Tony said laughing. "Wait, then that means, Harry knows of your world." Tony realized.

"Knows of it, Harry is the most famous of all the wizards," Arthur said, amazed the Prime Minister did not know this.

"Well, not exactly how I wanted you to find out, but it'll have to do." Harry said smiling.

"Harry, I had no idea, you're the son in law Arthur's been bragging about all these years, but you don't have the scar." Tony said confused.

"I'm a man of many faces." Harry said, making his scar reappear.

"Wow," was all Tony said.

"I wanted to tell you ahead of time, because there may be some creatures here you might find surprising." Harry said secretively.

"Like what," Tony asked nervously.

"Elves, witches, wizards and a half-giant," Harry said.

"Elves, I get to meet elves, I feel like a kid, when can I meet them?" He asked excitedly.

"Well, you can start by meeting my closest friends and servants, Dobby and Winky." Harry said, and instantly the two elves appeared at his side.

"Dobby, Winky, this is the muggle Prime Minister." Harry said to the elves.

“We are honored.” Dobby said, and they both bowed respectfully.

“It is I that am honored.” Tony said, also bowing deeply.

“It must feel great to be free.” The Prime Minister said matter-of-factly.

“Oh, we have been free long before the ‘Elf Rights’.” Winky said.

“Really,” Tony pressed.

“Oh yes sir, the Master has always treated elves as equals.” Dobby said.

“But you still work as servants?” Tony asked confused.

“Oh, we love Master Harry; we would never leave his side. He has given me and Winky a fortune so we can start our own family, but we won’t leave Master Harry.” Dobby explained.

“It’s Winky and me,” Harry corrected him.

“Oh yes, Winky and me.” Dobby corrected himself.

“Sorry, I’ve been working on his speech for the last year.” Harry apologized to Tony.

“Oh, no need for apologies, they speak perfect English.” Tony said smiling.

“Thank you Dobby, Winky; we’ll see you both at the party.” Harry said, and the elves disappeared.

“Wow that was an experience.” Tony said.

“You’ll get to meet other elves, a family of elves, including one that will be attending Hogwarts with Cindy.” Harry explained.

“Harry, you’ve met Mirta?” Arthur asked.

“Yes, we met today in Diagon Alley, and that’s what I wanted to talk to you about later.” Harry said, giving Arthur a knowing look.

"Well, in the meantime, let's get back to the party." Arthur recommended.

The three men made their way to the Ball Room. When Harry opened the door, it became evident the rest of his guests had arrived. The room was filled with people; Harry went around introducing the Prime Minister to all his guests.

"Draco, Rebecca, it's great to see you," Harry said, hugging them both. "Where are my godchildren?" Harry asked.

"Playing with the twins," Rebecca said, and then noticed the man standing next to Harry. "Mr. Prime Minister, it's an honor." She said, shaking his hand vigorously.

"Thank you, but please, call me Tony." He said smiling.

"Rebecca is also non magical." Harry told Tony.

"Good, so I won't be the only, what do you call us Arthur, oh yeah, muggle." The Prime Minister said.

"It's not so bad, everyone treats me special, I kind of like it." Rebecca said blushing.

"Oh Bec, you know you'll always be special to me." Harry said, kissing her cheek.

"Yeah but only because Draco made you godfather to both our children." She said playfully.

"Semantics," Harry played back.

"Master Harry," they heard a voice from behind.

"Merd, Merda, welcome to my home, let me introduce ..." Harry was cut off.

"Yes, we know who these two great men are. Ministers, we are honored to meet you both." Merd said reverently.

"You know me?" Tony said astonished.

"Of course, our old master had many dealings with you." Merd explained.

"Who were your masters?" Harry asked.

"The Johnson's," he replied.

"Angelina's parents," Harry asked.

"Yes sir, good, honest masters," Merd added.

"Good people indeed." The Prime Minister agreed.

"And Tony, let me introduce the first elf to attend Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry; Mirta." Harry said, motioning to the small elf that just arrived.

"I am very pleased to meet you." Tony said, sticking out his hand.

"Thank you." Mirta replied in a small voice.

"And how old are you, eleven?" Tony asked, knowing the starting age at Hogwarts.

"Oh no Mr. Prime Minister, we elves age differently than humans, Mirta is three and a half. We mature at a rate of three times that of humans." Merd explained.

"Remarkable," was all the Minister could say.

The party lasted well into the night; the guests didn't start leaving until after one in the morning. Ginny had been the perfect hostess, seeing to the needs of each and every guest right up until the moment they left.

By two in the morning, the only guests remaining were Arthur, Molly, Merd, Merda and Mirta; who was fast asleep on the couch.

"Do you believe what that man did?" Ginny asked her father, referring to the man at the book store.

"Unfortunately Ginny, that has been the common attitude since the law was passed. People just don't want the elves to be treated like everyone else." Arthur told his daughter.

"Too bad Hermione is on her honeymoon; she would have definitely given that man a piece of her mind." Molly added.

"A piece of her mind, Molly? She would have cursed him on the spot." Harry corrected her.

"Who is this Hermione?" Merd asked; intrigued by what the other two said.

"She means Hermione Granger." Harry explained.

"THE Hermione Granger, the mother of Elf Rights?" Merda asked.

"Yes Merda, THE Hermione Granger." Ginny answered, barely containing a laugh at Merda's reverence towards Hermione.

"No harm will ever befall your daughter as long as Hermione is teaching." Harry said.

"Or me," Molly agreed.

"Mum, you took the job?" Ginny asked.

"Yes dear, I gave them my answer last week." Molly said smiling.

"Congratulations Molly, you just made Hogwarts a better place." Harry said standing and kissing his mother in law.

"Here, here," Arthur agreed.

"We always knew Harry Potter was a great man, but we never knew he was such a good husband, and father, and son." Merda said.

"Here, here," Arthur agreed.

"So, what about the elves?" Harry asked, getting their attention away from him.

"Man will be man, there is nothing you can do Master Harry, nothing at all." Merd said sadly.

"That's where you're wrong, I can do plenty." Harry corrected him shortly.

"Harry, don't go off half-cocked, think before you try anything, it's easy for the public to go from love to hate, plan it out carefully." Arthur warned him.

"I always do Arthur, I always do." Harry said distractedly.

Dudley arrived from work that night; Petunia had never seen him look so down.

"What's wrong Dudley? Are you all right?" She asked nervously.

"I'm fine mum, I just found out the Financial Times was not wrong, Harry owns my company." Dudley said dejectedly.

"And mine." Vernon added, entering the room.

"Oh my, what are we going to do?" She asked nervously.

"As I see it, we only have two choices, quit and find other jobs, or throw ourselves at the mercy of Harry Potter." Dudley said astutely.

"Oh my," Petunia said again.

## **Chapter 2 – The Dinner Party**

Dudley and Vernon Dursley kept waiting for the axe to fall. They spent the week following the news of their new employer discussing various employment opportunities that they were both suited for.

Dudley was frantically preparing his resume on Monday evening, when the door bell rang unexpectedly.

“I’ll get it,” he bellowed to his parents.

When he opened the door, he was stunned to see the DHL delivery man staring back at him.

“Is this the Dursley’s?” He asked.

“Yes,” Dudley answered.

“I have a delivery,” the man said, handing Dudley a sealed envelope. “Please sign here,” he added, pointing to his clipboard.

“Thanks,” Dudley said, as he turned back into the house.

“Thank you sir,” the man said as he left the entranceway of the house.

Dudley took the envelope into the house and read the address line. It was addressed to the Dursley family, so he took it upon himself to open it.

He sat on the living room sofa, and ripped the envelope open. Inside there were two identical sealed envelopes, one for him and one addressed to Mr. and Mrs. Dursley. Dudley put his parent’s envelope down, and opened his.

You are cordially invited to the home of the 37th Baron of Lee, Harry Potter at Lee Castle; Scotland. The Baron and the Baroness request your presence on the 10th day of August, 2001. The dinner party is of semi-formal attire and transportation has been arranged. Please be prepared by noon on the 10th, a limousine will arrive at that time, and drive you to the Surrey heliport at the east of town.

The invitation was neither signed, nor did it afford the recipient the opportunity to decline. This made Dudley nervous.

“Mum, dad, get in here!” He yelled.

“What is it Dudley?” His mother asked concernedly.

“Here,” he said, handing her the other invitation.

“Oh no,” she added, when she read the note.

“What?” Vernon asked, taking the invitation from his wife.

“I think this is it, dad, the day after tomorrow, we’ll be looking for jobs.” Dudley said exasperatedly.

“Now son, this doesn’t sound all that bad, he’s sending a car and has chartered a helicopter, I think if he was going to sack us; he would have done it by parcel, don’t you?” Vernon asked, trying to keep Dudley’s spirits high.

“I guess, but think about all we’ve done to him; do you really think he’s going to be appreciative?” Dudley asked back.

“What will I wear?” Petunia asked suddenly.

“Now Petunia dear, we’ll just go out tomorrow and find you the perfect dress.” Vernon said soothingly.

“It better be perfect.” Petunia warned as she went back into the kitchen.

“And new suits for us, right Dudley?” Vernon asked.

“Absolutely,” Dudley agreed.

The Dursley’s awoke early the next morning, with the specific intention of purchasing new clothes for the trip to Lee Castle. They had resolved to purchase the most expensive outfits they could afford to attempt to impress their former charge.

Dudley was going to use all the money he had saved over the last year to buy a new watch. He told his parents it was for the dinner, but Dudley had been intending to use his savings expressly for the watch regardless.

Dudley and Vernon were sitting at the kitchen table as Petunia cooked their breakfast. Dudley was reading the Financial Times, and Vernon was watching his wife burn the bacon.

“Need any help Petunia dear?” Vernon asked impatiently.

“No, breakfast will be ready in a moment.” She said cheerfully knowing she was getting a new dress.

“Do you think the tailor can alter all the clothes in time for tomorrow?” Dudley asked from behind his newspaper.

“He’d better, for the money we pay him.” Vernon snapped.

“I don’t know Vernon, the last time it took him over a week just to do one of Dudley’s suits.” Petunia piped in.

“I’ll get it,” Dudley bellowed as the door bell rang.

“All I know is that boy better appreciate the lengths we’re going for him.” Vernon said angrily, referring to Harry.

“He never appreciated us before.” Petunia spat.

“He was always worthless.” Vernon agreed.

Petunia softened for a moment. “But maybe we shouldn’t be so critical, considering the present climate.” Petunia hinted, implying Harry’s ownership of both the businesses the Dursley men worked for.

Vernon was about to argue, when Dudley entered holding three large packages.

“What are those?” Petunia asked.

“They’re from Lee Castle.” Dudley said simply.

Petunia and Vernon gave each other concerned looks, and then stood next to Dudley.

"There's one box for each of us." Dudley explained.

Vernon and Petunia took theirs to either side of the kitchen, and Dudley just opened his on the spot. Inside of Dudley's box was a brand new Ginny Original, double-breasted, black business suit. When he looked at the tag, it was just his size. He took out the blazer and tried it on; it looked like it had been custom fitted to his frame.

Dudley moved the pants and saw shoes, shirt, tie, and even a new watch; a Rolex.

"Mum, dad, look at this," he said, holding up his new watch.

When he looked towards his parents, they were holding up clothing of their own. Vernon's suit was dark blue, while Petunia's dress was royal blue. They were both staring at their garments open-mouthed.

"This is a Ginny Original; it must have cost a fortune." Petunia said in an awestruck voice.

"Did you see the watch?" Dudley asked his parents.

They looked at Dudley, who was still holding up his Rolex, and then began to search through the rest of their packages. Each Dursley, in turn, pulled out a new Rolex watch. Each was solid 18 karat gold, with diamonds encrusted on the face.

"I guess we don't have to go shopping." Dudley said humorously.

"We should return all this." Vernon said suddenly.

"What? Are you kidding? I'm not returning anything, I'm keeping mine." Dudley announced, and stormed out of the kitchen with his gifts in tow.

"Sorry Vernon, you're on your own, I've wanted a Ginny Original for two years, and I'm not giving it up now." Petunia said, and followed Dudley out of the kitchen.

Harry was sitting on the beach of Potter Castle; he was enjoying a tropical drink while reading the muggle newspapers. Ginny was lying on the sand next to him, while the twins played nearby.

"Why are we being nice to THOSE people?" Ginny asked suddenly, referring to the Dursley's. "Didn't they torture you as a child, lock you up in the cupboard under the stairs, feed you scraps, and treat you like dirt?" Ginny pressed.

Harry turned to her with a solemn expression. "They are my family." Harry answered simply.

"Don't lie to me Harry Potter, I know there's more to this than you're telling." Ginny said angrily.

Harry looked down at her again. "Would you prefer it, if I killed them?" Harry asked seriously.

"No, of course not," Ginny said defensively.

"Well then, I only have this one choice; I am making a big move into the muggle community, THEY are the only ones who can do me any real harm in my endeavors. If I leave things unresolved, they could bury me, and all my businesses, just by simply telling the press I'm a wizard. Most people would interpret that as devil worship, or black magic, or something else sinister, I need to control them." Harry explained.

"By bribery," Ginny asked.

"No, well, actually yes, I'm going to offer them great paying jobs, in a secure location. That way, they'll be happy with all the extra money, and I can keep their exposure down to a minimum." Harry continued.

"Oh, a gilded cage," Ginny said catching on.

"Exactly, most people look at a gilded cage as just a cage, the Dursley's look at it as just gilded, so, as long as they feel rich and important, they'll do what they're told." Harry added.

"Now I understand, I thought you were growing soft." Ginny said, rubbing Harry's arm.

"Not soft, just intelligent." Harry said smiling.

"And modest too," Ginny said sarcastically, standing to kiss him. "I'll get the twins back to Lee Castle, you go inside and get Cindy, she has to get ready, tonight is the big night." Ginny added as she picked up the twins.

"Don't worry, we'll be home soon, I want to talk to Sirius before I go." Harry said standing.

"Don't be long," Ginny said as she apparated with the twins.

Harry went inside, Potter Castle was still the residence of the entire Weasley family, Sirius and his girlfriend Tonks, Remus and his wife Katie and their 2 children, and of course Ron and Hermione. Since Hermione was incapable of having children, Ron enjoyed the pleasure of Remus' children; James who was three and Sirius who was one.

Harry walked into the dining hall to find Ron struggling with Sirius' diaper. Evidently after several years with these children, he still had not mastered the skill of changing diapers.

"It's not a rocket science." Harry said, walking into the room.

"Wanna bet," Ron retorted as he fumbled with the safety pin.

Harry pushed Ron out of the way, and quickly finished the job. Ron stared at him amazed.

"I'll never get the hang of this." Ron said shaking his head.

"Where's your goddaughter?" Harry asked him.

"Last I saw her; she was watching James in the library." Ron said, picking Sirius up.

Harry walked across the hall to the library; Cindy was using wandless magic to play catch with James.

"Having fun?" Harry asked his daughter.

"Yeah," Cindy responded simply.

"We have to go, take James to Katie so we can get ready for dinner." Harry told her.

"Ok daddy," she said, waving her hand toward James making him rise off the floor.

"Me stay," James bellowed.

"No James, we have to find mommy." Cindy said, wrapping her arms around him.

"Me fly," James asked Cindy.

"Ok, but just 'til we find mommy." Cindy said, and then waved her hand and James began to float a meter off the ground.

"Is this why the kids love you so much?" Harry asked jokingly.

Cindy smiled a sly smile, and left with James floating in front her.

"She's in the kitchen." Harry called out to Cindy.

"How do you do that?" Hermione asked, walking up to Harry and lightly kissing him on the lips.

"I've told you before, the castle is enchanted, and I communicate with it. That's how I know everyone is safe, and where they are specifically." Harry explained.

"Yeah, but I'll still never get it. Hey, I just thought of something, can you see people in the castle?" Hermione asked.

"Yeah, I see you right now." Harry said sarcastically.

"That's not what I meant and you know it." Hermione said huffily.

"If I were so inclined, yes, I can see people in the castle." Harry explained.

"So if I were in the shower right now, you could see me, if you were so inclined." Hermione asked more than said.

"Yeah, but it's not like I haven't SEEN you before." Harry retorted.

Hermione blushed. "And we really enjoy that." Hermione whispered to Harry, implying her and Ginny.

"Just think, if you and Ron hadn't gotten together, I'm sure Ginny would have loved for that arrangement to continue." Harry whispered back, making Hermione blush even redder.

"Me too," she whispered back, and kissed Harry again.

"Sirius," Harry called to his godfather as he entered the hallway.

"Harry, I was hoping to see you before you left." Sirius said pleasantly as he hugged his godson.

"I was wondering if you and Tonks were going to the World Cup." Harry asked him.

"No, we decided to utilize the empty castle to get reacquainted." Sirius explained.

"Really," Harry started with a laugh, "those stairs over there are the most comfortable, and don't forget the pool." Harry joked.

"Oh be quiet," Sirius said jokingly.

"Well, if you don't mind, I'll be using your name again for the match." Harry told his godfather.

"Ah yes, the return of Harrison Black," Sirius joked. "No problem, just don't embarrass the Black family name." Sirius continued joking.

"I thought I already did," Harry joked back, hugging his godfather.

"Have fun at the match." Sirius said hugging Harry back then leaving.

Cindy returned a few moments later, she and Harry apparated back to Lee Castle to prepare for dinner that evening. They were expecting the Dursley's at seven, but Harry had everybody ready by five.

He assembled his wife and children along with Arthur, Molly, Ron and Hermione in his office, the time had finally come at last.

"Cindy, could you come here a moment?" Harry asked his daughter.

"Yes daddy?" She asked.

"I know you haven't given it much thought, considering you don't use one, but you need one anyway." Harry said cryptically as he handed Cindy a rectangular box.

"What is it?" She asked excitedly.

"Open it, you'll see." Harry said smiling.

Cindy opened the box to reveal a wand, Harry's old wand. She picked it up and red and gold sparks shot out of its tip.

"The perfect match," Harry announced, and the group applauded.

"But daddy, this is your wand." Cindy said confused.

"I thought it would be the perfect wand for you, and it is. But that's not the only gift I have for you." Harry added, holding his arm in the air.

A white owl swooped down from the rafters and landed on Harry's outstretched arm.

"Hedwig, you're giving me Hedwig?" She asked, even more excitedly.

"No, I'm not giving her to you, she wants to go with you, there's a difference. She wants to go back to Hogwarts as your owl, so here she is." Harry explained, holding out his arm to Cindy.

Hedwig jumped to Cindy's shoulder, and began hooting happily. Harry smiled at the sight of Cindy standing there with Hedwig on her shoulder, and his old wand in her hand, the only thing Harry thought

would have made the vision even better, would have been Gryffindor robes.

“Daddy?” Cindy asked.

“Yes baby?” Harry said.

“Why do I need a wand?” Cindy asked politely.

“You care to field this one, Molly?” Harry said, turning to his mother-in-law.

“Well Cindy, it’s like this,” Molly began, “the other children in the school don’t understand magic without a wand, you’ll need to have one so the other children don’t get jealous.” Molly finished.

“Oh, that’s good.” Ginny said.

“Am I different?” Cindy asked, turning to her mother.

Ginny paused for a moment, choosing her words carefully. “Yes Cindy, you are different, but not just different, special. There is no other witch on the planet like you.” Ginny began, but was cut off by her husband.

“Except your mother.” Harry piped in; Ginny leered at him momentarily, then began again.

“Not even I, am as powerful as you, you are the most powerful witch on the planet, but you can’t go around showing everybody because, like your grandmother said, they’ll all be jealous.” Ginny explained.

“So I have to be holding a wand when I do Magic?” Cindy asked.

“Exactly.” Ginny answered.

“Ok.” Cindy agreed.

“Congratulations!” The adults exclaimed at once.

“Now take Hedwig and the wand upstairs, we’ll be having company soon.” Harry told Cindy.

"Thank you daddy," Cindy said, kissing her father on the cheek.

"You're welcome, baby." Harry answered, sitting back down.

As soon as Cindy left, Harry turned to Ron. "How's the Quidditch Cup training going?" He asked his best friend.

"Excellent, I think we'll actually beat Romania." Ron answered excitedly.

"And the preparations," Harry asked Arthur.

"Everything's going according to plan. That rainforest you donated in Belize is perfect, no muggles around for hundreds of kilometers." Arthur said.

"Don't you think it's dangerous to use that land, considering you plan on putting the Dursley's in Belize?" Hermione asked.

"I don't think so, no one knows it's my land; they'll just assume the Minister procured the land on his own. And if they manage to suspect me, the mountain we're using for the match is nowhere near the beach houses I plan on putting the Dursley's in." Harry explained.

"Thanks again mate, for everything, the team, the stadium, everything." Ron said seriously.

"Hey, don't thank me, you're the one who took a last place team, and got them to the Quidditch Cup, all I did is have a stadium built for the occasion, you deserve the praise." Harry retorted.

"Enough of this mutual admiration garbage, let's get ready for dinner." Ginny said, slapping both her brother and husband on the back of the head.

"Yes Ginny dear." They both answered, making everybody laugh.

The Prime Minister of England arrived shortly after they sat down in the dining room. Harry greeted him and escorted him to his seat. They held off eating until the rest of the guests had arrived.

They didn't have long to wait; the bell rang ten minutes after they sat down to talk. Harry decided to answer it himself, but was too slow; the butler beat him to it.

"Good evening," the butler said to the group at the door.

"Good evening, the Dursley's to see the Baron." Vernon answered officially.

"Right this way," the butler answered.

When the Dursley's entered the hall, they saw Harry staring back at them.

"Uncle Vernon, Aunt Petunia, Dudley, how great to see you." Harry greeted them, with a seemingly warm disposition.

"Harry, is this really your castle?" Dudley asked, actually sounding happy to see his cousin.

"Actually, it's the smaller of two castles I own." Harry explained, as he shook Dudley's hand. "Please, let's go into the dining room." Harry added, motioning to the doorway behind him.

Harry kept turning to look at the Dursley's, Dudley was in awe, and Vernon and Petunia were staring daggers at their surroundings, half expecting something magical to jump out at them.

"Ginny dear, look who's arrived." Harry said to his wife.

Ginny rose from her chair and went to greet them.

"Uncle Vernon, Aunt Petunia, Dudley, this is my wife, Virginia, Ginny, these are the Dursley's." Harry introduced them.

Dudley stared, open-mouthed at Ginny, he evidently found her as beautiful as Harry.

"Pleased to meet you all, welcome to my home." She greeted, shaking each of their hands in turn.

"Let me introduce you to our other guests," Ginny added, motioning to the rest of the people in the room. "These are my parents, Arthur and Molly, this is Harry's godfather, Sirius Black, and this is the Prime Minister of England; Tony Bl..." Ginny was cut off by Vernon.

"Mr. Prime Minister, what an honor to meet you." Vernon said, almost knocking his wife over to introduce himself.

"Thank you Mr. Dursley, I am pleased to meet you too." The Prime Minister said nervously. "Have you met the Minister of Magic, Arthur Weasley?" The Minister asked, trying to get the attention off himself.

"Minister of Magic, you know about these people?" Vernon asked shocked.

"Of course I do, all Ministers have known, we have a fantastic working relationship with the magical community, and even more so since Arthur became Minister and Harry defeated the most powerful dark wizard in history." The Prime Minister said indignantly.

The words meant nothing to Vernon, but hit a chord with Petunia. She knew full well that this dark wizard was powerful, she remembered quite well what was in that note when Harry had been dropped at her doorstep, and most importantly, she knew if Harry defeated him, than he would be the most powerful wizard on Earth.

"Let me finish the introductions; this is my best friend, and brother in law, Ron, his wife Hermione and hiding behind that pillar over there, is my daughter Cindy." Harry announced without looking in Cindy's direction.

Cindy came out sheepishly from behind the pillar at the other end of the room.

"Daughter," Petunia said disbelievingly.

"She's adopted," Hermione whispered to her and Petunia nodded her understanding.

"Now, let's all sit and eat." Harry said smiling.

Ron, who was seated next to Dudley, decided to strike up a conversation. "Have you ever heard of Quidditch?" Ron asked.

"No," Dudley answered curiously.

"It's a wizard sport; it's played on broomsticks..." Ron continued his explanation of the sport as Hermione turned to Petunia.

"So did you like your dress?" Hermione asked.

"Oh it's wonderful, she's my favorite designer." Petunia said honestly.

"Thank you, that means a lot to me." Ginny said from the other side of the table.

"You don't mean..." Petunia started but was cut off.

"Yeah, you didn't know, this Ginny is THE Ginny, she designs these wonderful clothes." The Prime Minister interrupted.

"She designs your clothes too?" Petunia asked Hermione.

"She's famous world wide, both in the muggle world and the wizarding world." Hermione added.

"Do you have any other designs I might like?" Petunia asked expectantly.

"Actually yes, I designed quite a bit, just for you. I was going to give you the dresses as a Christmas gift." Ginny lied.

"Can I see the designs?" Petunia asked, now completely taken with the idea of wearing all original designs.

"Of course, after dinner we'll go to my office upstairs." Ginny said happily.

"Is that where Potter, I mean Harry got all his money?" Vernon interjected.

Ginny laughed. "Hardly, Harry was the one who financed my designs, he's the reason I'm so famous." Ginny corrected him.

“So where did he get it?” Vernon pressed.

“Vernon, that’s none of your business.” Petunia scolded him, not wanting to upset her favorite designer.

“That’s all right, Harry inherited a great deal of money, first from his parents, then when everyone thought Sirius was dead, and finally from a distant forefather.” Ginny explained happily.

“How rich is he?” Vernon continued.

“Vernon,” Petunia scolded again.

“No Petunia, it’s all right, Harry is without a doubt the richest man on Earth, muggle or wizard. More so now than before; he has made some great investments that have earned him quite a lot of money. He’s very entrepreneurial.” Ginny explained.

“Is that why he bought our companies, to show off?” Vernon asked angrily.

“Actually Vernon, I only bought your company, I started Dudley’s, as a matter of fact, I had no idea he was working for me until a few weeks ago.” Harry interrupted.

“And now what are you going to do?” Vernon asked the question that was burning in his mind.

“Well, I was going to talk to you in private, but since you asked, I’ll tell you. I wanted to offer you and Dudley the positions of Executive Vice President of Sales, and Executive Vice President of Distribution in one of my largest companies; Black Motors.” Harry explained.

“How much are you going to pay us?” Vernon asked.

“One million Euros a year, each,” Harry answered emotionlessly.

“What’s the catch?” Vernon asked, knowing full well there would be one.

“The catch is you’ll have to relocate.” Harry answered.

"To where," Dudley asked.

"A beachfront house in Belize, you obviously get your own Dudley, and your parents get one of their own." Harry answered.

"You're offering us a beachfront home and a million Euros per year, each?" Dudley asked for verification.

"Yes, I owe you and your family a lot for raising me, and I know you wouldn't want charity, so I'm offering you great jobs and a great place to live. But you don't have to answer now, you can think about it." Harry explained.

"Are you kidding, where do I sign?" Dudley asked quickly.

"Now Dudley, you should think about this first." His father warned.

"Are you nutters, he's offering me four times what he pays me now and a beachfront house, I don't need to think about anything, I'm ready now." Dudley argued.

"And Vernon doesn't need to think about it either, he accepts." Petunia answered for her husband.

"Petunia," Vernon started, but was cut off by the look he received from his wife. He knew she was serious, and not to argue.

"Excellent, when would you like to start?" Harry asked them.

"Tomorrow," both Dudley and Petunia said together.

"Well, if you're serious, I can arrange it." Harry said.

"I am serious." Dudley answered.

"So am I." Petunia added.

"Then it's done; everything in your house on Privet Drive has been moved to your new homes. Dudley, you'll have new furniture in every room." Harry said smiling.

"Are you serious?" Petunia asked.

"Oh trust me, if Harry says it's done, than it's done." The Prime Minister interjected.

"How will we get there?" Vernon asked.

"I'll have a plane waiting to take you to Belize as soon as we're done eating." Harry answered.

"Just like that," Vernon asked.

"Just like that," Harry answered.

The group continued eating and talking about various unimportant topics. Dudley was really interested in the whole Quidditch thing. He kept pressing Ron for more information, until Ron found himself wanting to end the conversation.

"How about you come to the Quidditch World Cup? I'm sure Harry won't mind." Ron asked Dudley.

"Wow, really, that sounds great, you don't mind Harry, do you?" Dudley asked excitedly.

"No," Harry said, not sounding completely sincere.

"Great, I'd love to go." Dudley told Ron.

"And you can sit with me; it'll be my first time too." The Prime Minister added.

When the meal was over, the group retired to the ball room, where Harry had set out some of the comfortable furniture he brought from Potter Castle.

"Where are Ginny and my Aunt?" Harry asked Ron.

"I think they went upstairs with Hermione and Cindy." Ron said.

"For what," Harry pressed.

"Something about clothes," Ron answered distractedly.

Ginny was showing Petunia and Hermione the new designs she had drawn up the day before, Cindy, who had already seen them, was going through some clothes her mother had on a rack.

"Oh I would look great in that one." Petunia was telling Ginny.

"It's yours, I'll have it made up and delivered to you in Belize." Ginny said.

"Oh no, don't bother, I'd have nowhere to wear a business suit." Petunia argued.

"Actually, I wanted to talk to you about that." Ginny said.

"About what," Petunia asked curiously.

"Well, I don't know if you know, but my main manufacturing plant for the Americas is being moved to Belize, and I would so much like for you to run it." Ginny explained.

"You're not serious, are you?" Petunia asked hopefully.

"Very serious, Harry has told me how you've been waiting on them their whole lives, and now you must feel so alone, and I desperately need someone I can trust, someone who'll make sure quotas are met, and budgets are adhered to. Do you think you'd be interested?" Ginny asked.

"Interested, I'm very interested. I've wanted to get out of that house since Dudley started working. I'm losing my mind there, and I don't really think I'll do any better on the beach, probably worse. Please, when do I start?" Petunia asked, feeling useful for the first time in three years.

"The plant will be complete in two months, but I'll need you to start hiring the staff by next week, so let's say, in three days." Ginny said authoritatively.

"Deal," Petunia said, shaking Ginny's hand.

They continued looking through Ginny's designs until midnight, when Petunia decided it was time to go home, to their new homes.

Harry and Ginny walked the Dursley's to the front door, Harry shook Vernon's hand, but when he tried to shake Dudley's, Dudley did something he had never done before, he hugged Harry.

Harry hid his surprise extremely well, well that is, until Petunia walked straight up to him and kissed him on both cheeks.

"Thank you Harry, thank you for everything." She said smiling.

"You're very welcome," Harry replied trying desperately to hide his surprise and failing miserably.

The moment they were out the door, Harry turned to his wife.

"The greedy are so easy to manipulate." He said with a hint of satisfaction.

"Yeah, I know," Ginny agreed.

Harry took a step back from his wife, "what did you do?" He asked.

"I gave Petunia the run of the new factory in Belize." Ginny said in her own satisfied voice.

"Vernon's going to flip, his wife working, it's a shame I won't be there to see it." Harry said laughing. "You know Mrs. Potter; I do believe I'm having a bad influence on you." Harry said, kissing Ginny passionately.

"Oh no Mr. Potter, you ruined me a long time ago." She retorted.

"Oh get a room you two." Ron said walking passed them to leave.

"Oh why, don't you want to watch your baby sister having wild animal sex with your best friend?" Harry asked teasingly.

"You forget Potter; I am the Under Secretary for Dark Magic Enforcement." Ron warned jokingly.

"Yeah, but you'll always be Ronnykins to me." Harry joked back, making Ginny, Ron and Hermione laugh.

The Quidditch World Cup was set for the 24th of August; Harry awoke early the day before to prepare his family for the trip to Belize. The Quidditch stadium was built on top of a small mountain in central Belize where Harry owned several thousand acres. Tents were to be set up all around the mountain, and though Harry and his family were authorized to arrive on the morning of the match, he decided to arrive a day early so they could enjoy the experience.

"Do we have everything?" Ginny asked Harry.

"I think so, we have the tent, some food, a change of clothes and the toys to amuse the twins, I don't think we really need anything else." Harry said, going over all he had packed the night before.

"How are we getting there?" Cindy asked her father.

"A port key, one is set up to take us at eight o'clock this morning." Harry answered smiling.

"I don't like them." Cindy announced.

"Neither do I sweetheart, but we have to look like regular wizards, if they see you apparate, or if they see us apparate with the twins in tow, they'll be too many questions." Harry explained.

"Everybody ready," Ginny asked.

"Let's go have some fun." Harry said drawing the family close. "Is everybody touching the key? Ok, three, two, one," the next moment, they all felt the uncomfortable feeling of a hook behind the navel.

They went spinning through space, Harry, no matter how often he used a port key, he hated it. When they finally stopped, Harry and Ginny, still holding the twins were standing perfectly erect, while Cindy lay on the floor with the packed items lying on top of her.

"Is everyone ok?" Ginny asked the group.

They all moaned their agreement.

"Welcome to the Quidditch World Cup. Names please," a plump wizard in bottle green robes asked them.

"Black," Harry lied.

"Ah yes, the Black family, five total I see, yes, you have a perfect spot along the main trail. Just follow the road to the plot marked number one." The wizard said, handing Harry a map of the tent sites.

"Thank you sir, thank you very much." Harry said, taking the map.

"Now please, we have another arrival in twenty two seconds." The wizard said, ushering them away.

The Potters made their way to their assigned campsite, Ginny noticed it was the largest of all, and had been cordoned off from the rest.

"Not exactly inconspicuous is it?" Ginny asked playfully.

"We may be traveling incognito, but that doesn't mean we have to settle for anything less than the best." Harry said smiling.

They immediately began the task of setting up the tent. Harry had purchased what a muggle would call a twelve-man tent, but upon entering, you knew immediately it was no regular tent.

The tent had six bedrooms, a kitchen, dining room and even a family room complete with billiard table. It took them only an hour to set up and Ginny began cooking immediately.

"Harry, go get water for boiling, Cindy, come help me with breakfast." Ginny commanded as the twins began rolling the billiard balls across the floor.

"Yes Ginny dear." Harry said playfully, and left the tent.

Harry looked at the map the wizard had given him, even though it was his property they were all standing on, he did not know where they had set up the wells.

"Ah, there it is, back down the trail and to the left." He said to himself.

He began walking down the trail, he laughed in spite of himself when he started seeing all the team colors hanging by each tent. "Just like last time." He thought to himself. When he arrived near the well, he saw someone he hadn't seen in two years; Parvati Patil.

He noticed she was flirting shamelessly with a very muscular young man, who at a distance, looked very familiar, Harry decided to say hello.

"Hey sexy," Harry said, coming up behind her.

"Harry," she exclaimed, and hugged him tightly. "It's been so long, how have you been? How are Ginny and the kids?" She asked quickly.

"Everyone's great, how are you and Padma?" Harry asked back.

"Good, Padma is still working for the Dark Aurors, and I'm still working for the team. Oh, I'd like you to meet someone." She said turning to acknowledge the man she had been flirting with. "This is..." But she never got to finish, Harry did it for her.

"Dudley," Harry exclaimed.

## Chapter 3 – The Gang's all Here

Cindy began walking around the campgrounds looking for anyone to talk to. Since most of her life was spent with adults, she was not shy about walking up to complete strangers and starting up a conversation.

She wandered into a field of orange tents that obviously housed the fans of the Chudley Cannons. She saw many children walking around in groups, but none she was interested in talking to. She was just about to head over to the opposite field when she heard a voice from behind.

“Hi Cindy,” the voice said.

Cindy turned around to find a familiar face; Kari Jersey. “Hi Kari,” she responded happily.

“You got tickets too, my dad got his from work, the owner of the Chudley Cannons himself gave them to him.” Kari said proudly.

“Yeah, Uncle Ron is really nice that way.” Cindy said, not sounding conceited at all.

“He’s your uncle?” Kari asked impressed.

“And my godfather, actually.” She said, now sounding embarrassed.

“Wow, that’s so cool.” Kari said; still sounding impressed.

“Wanna go wander around?” Cindy asked.

“Sure, but let me tell my mum and dad.” Kari said, motioning for Cindy to follow.

Cindy followed Kari through the sea of orange to a small tent on the other side of the field. She followed her inside to find Mr. and Mrs. Jersey sitting on the sofa of a two room flat.

“Mum, dad, look who I found.” Kari said to her parents.

"Cindy, how wonderful to see you again," Kari's mother said with her deep French accent.

"Hello Mrs. Jersey, Mr. Jersey." Cindy greeted them.

"Ah Miss Potter, I should have expected to see you here." Mr. Jersey began, rising from the sofa. "Is your father here, I'd very much like to speak to him?" He asked.

"Yes, he's out getting some water for my mom to cook." Cindy explained.

"Where is your tent?" Mr. Jersey asked politely.

"Um, lot number 1." Cindy said, remembering the sign on the cordoned piece of land.

"Ah, I should have known, I'll stop on by later." He declared.

"Ok." Cindy said, not really sure if it was her place to say anything at all.

"Mum, Cindy and I want to go around exploring, is that ok?" Kari asked her mother.

"Of course dear, just don't leave the campsites." Her mother warned.

"Ok, bye." Kari said, dragging Cindy out of the tent with her.

"I think they're becoming fast friends." Mr. Jersey said to his wife.

"Does that make you happy because of Cindy or because of her father?" Mrs. Jersey asked coldly.

"Both." He said to his wife, and went back to reading his paper. Luckily he didn't see the contemptuous look she gave him as he buried his face in the newspaper.

Cindy and Kari began exploring their surroundings. They passed several groups of boys and girls, but all seemed more interested in talking about the upcoming Quidditch match than anything else.

They were about to head over to Cindy's tent when they saw three girls standing in a circle and throwing a hat in the air to each other. The two girls went to investigate. As they got closer, they noticed exactly what they were doing, they were keeping a hat away from what looked like a small girl, but as they were about to find out, it was not what they thought.

"Hey, what do you think you're doing?" Cindy yelled out to the three.

"None of your business, this servant thinks it can do what it wants." The tallest of the three yelled back.

Cindy looked passed the tall girl and saw what she meant. In the center of the circle was a small, violently frightened elf.

"Mirta," Cindy yelled, as she knocked over the tall girl and grabbed the hat from her.

"Hey, what are you doing?" The tall girl yelled back, standing back up.

"Get away from her!" Cindy yelled, now on the verge of anger.

"And what if I don't?" The tall girl asked.

"Then you'll answer to me." Kari said, pushing the girl back on the floor.

When the other two girls went towards Kari, Cindy made a sweeping motion with her leg, and tripped them both.

"Get away NOW!" Cindy screamed.

The two she tripped did not need telling twice, they scurried off as fast as they could, but the taller one remained.

"You're going to wish you hadn't done that." She warned, getting back up from the floor.

"Why, are you going to fall down again?" Kari asked, knocking her down again.

The tall girl scurried off after her two friends, Cindy turned to the frightened elf.

“Are you ok, Mirta?” Cindy asked concernedly.

“Yes.” She said in a tiny elf voice.

“Do you want to walk around with us?” Kari asked.

“Yes.” She repeated in the same small voice.

“Kari, this is Mirta, Mirta, this is Kari.” Cindy introduced them.

“Pleased to meet you,” Kari said, thrusting out her hand, much like her father.

“Hello.” Mirta said softly, taking Kari’s hand.

“Mirta is going to be going to Hogwarts with us.” Cindy said to Kari as the three began walking together.

“Cool, you can hang out with us.” Kari said happily.

“Thank you.” Mirta said simply.

“That was so cool.” A girl with red hair and freckles said, running up to the three.

“Thanks, and you are?” Kari asked.

“Madison Roseworth, of the Glasgow Roseworths,” she answered proudly.

“Kari Jersey, this is Cindy Potter, and this is Mirta.” Kari introduced them.

“Potter, as in the Baron of Lee, Potter,” she asked; sounding extremely impressed.

“Yes.” She answered, slightly embarrassed.

"Mummy and daddy would love to meet you." Madison said, pointing to her tent.

"Maybe later, we want to go exploring, want to come?" Cindy asked politely.

"Aye, let me just tell me parents." She said, running towards her tent.

Madison emerged a moment later with a second girl in tow. The second girl had much of the same features as Madison, but was obviously not a sister.

"Mum wants me to take me cousin along; this is Hannah, Hannah Webster." She introduced her.

Hannah looked up from her copy of 'Hogwarts, A History' to nod at the other three.

"Do you know Hogwarts has hundreds of hidden rooms?" She asked the group.

"Yes, I've seen some of them." Cindy said honestly.

"You've seen them?" Kari asked, sounding unconvinced.

"Yeah, my mom and dad used to take me there a lot, my dad even showed me the Chamber of Secrets, and it's so cool." Cindy said, remembering the trip she took with her father two years before.

"Wow, that's so cool." Kari said.

"Aye," Madison agreed.

"Do you know the castle well?" Hannah asked; sounding very interested.

"Actually, yes, I spent quite a lot of time there once." Cindy explained vaguely.

"That is interesting; will you be starting this year also?" Hannah asked politely.

"Yes, you," Cindy asked back.

"Yes I will, perhaps we can spend some time together, when we're not studying I mean." Hannah said.

"You're always studying." Madison argued.

"What do you all say to some exploring?" Kari asked, trying to end the boring conversation.

"Let's go." Cindy agreed.

"Harry, good to see you," Dudley said warmly, shaking Harry's hand.

"You two know each other?" Parvati asked.

"Yeah, Dudley's my cousin." Harry explained, still reeling from the shock.

"Harry, you never told me you had such a charming cousin, not to mention so, muscular." Parvati said, eyeing Dudley up and down.

"And Harry, you never told me the women in that school of yours were so, sexy." Dudley said, eyeing Parvati up and down as well.

"Um, Parvati, do you realize my cousin's a muggle?" Harry asked her.

"I don't care." She responded, never taking her eyes off Dudley.

"And Dudley, do you realize Parvati is a witch?" Harry asked Dudley.

"I don't care." Dudley answered, never taking his eyes off Parvati.

"Well, don't I feel like a third wheel, I think I'll be going now." He said, more to himself than the other two.

They paid him actually no mind; Harry just shrugged and went back to the queue for the water.

When Harry was finally done getting water for Ginny, he began to make his way back to the tent. He passed Parvati and Dudley a second time, but made no attempt to communicate with them.

Harry was just about back to the tent when he saw a small group of girls walking just ahead of him.

“Cindy,” he called out to his daughter.

“Oh, hi daddy,” Cindy said, turning towards her father.

“Now what mischief are you girls getting yourselves into?” Harry asked playfully.

“None daddy,” Cindy said unconvincingly.

“I see. Hello Kari, hello Mirta, and who might you two be?” Harry asked the other two girls.

“Uh Baron, I’m a, a, Madison, and this is my cousin Hannah.” Madison stuttered.

“Pleased to meet you both, but just call me Harry,” Harry said, shaking their hands.

“Oh no, we could never,” Madison said nervously.

“And why is that?” Harry asked.

“My parents would kill me if they even thought I called the famous Harry Potter by his first name.” Madison explained.

“Trust me, your parents won’t kill you, and besides, if they might, just take Cindy along, she’ll protect you.” Harry said, playfully patting Cindy on the head.

“Oh cut it out dad, you’re embarrassing me.” Cindy said, turning red.

“That’s my job sweetheart, to embarrass you as much as possible.” Harry joked.

“Oh Harry, my dad said he was going to stop by your tent later.” Kari said, proudly using Harry’s first name.

“Thank you Kari, I’d like to talk to him again.” Harry said smiling.

"Ok daddy, we're going exploring." Cindy said, ushering the other girls away.

"Make sure you all come back for lunch." Harry called out to her.

"We will daddy." Cindy called back.

Harry headed into the tent. Ginny was feeding the twins.

"Took you long enough," Ginny said exasperatedly.

"Sorry, I ran into some friends." Harry said vaguely.

"Who," Ginny asked.

"Parvati, flirting maliciously with a man," Harry answered.

"Just like her, who was she flirting with?" Ginny pressed.

"Dudley." Harry said, almost in a whisper.

"DUDLEY!" Ginny shrieked.

Harry began to laugh. "Yeah, I couldn't believe it either. I even checked, Dudley knows she's a witch and Parvati knows he's a muggle, incredible." Harry said, shaking his head.

"I hope Petunia doesn't find out." Ginny said, almost laughing.

"Petunia, I hope Vernon doesn't find out." Harry corrected and the two laughed together.

Harry began preparing himself something to eat. "What do you think about a big dinner tonight?" Harry asked Ginny.

"Who do you plan on inviting?" Ginny asked.

"Well, I just saw Cindy with four other girls, I think they're becoming a group, I'd like to invite their families to dinner tonight." Harry explained.

"Who was she with?" Ginny continued questioning Harry.

"Well, let's see, there was that girl Kari, and the elf student Mirta and two other girls; Madison and her cousin Hannah." He said while pouring himself a cup of tea.

"And perhaps a certain couple you saw flirting?" Ginny pressed.

Harry smiled at his wife. "Yes and a certain flirting couple." Harry agreed.

"I don't see why not, but isn't Ron and Hermione supposed to stop by tonight?" Ginny asked.

"Yeah, so much the better, I'd love to see how those two act towards each other when both their employers are here." Harry said, almost laughing again.

"You are bad Mr. Potter." Ginny said smiling.

"And you are beautiful, Mrs. Potter." Harry retorted, sitting down next to her, and kissing her lightly on the lips.

"Yeah, you say that now, but when I'm four hundred pounds because of this thing inside me, will you still say that?" Ginny asked jokingly.

"I don't care if you're four hundred pounds and not pregnant, I'll always see you as beautiful." Harry said seriously.

"You do spoil me, don't you?" She said kissing him back.

"Kiss me!" Little Arthur yelled at his mother.

"Me too," little Molly agreed.

"Ok, ok, plenty of kisses to go around." Ginny said, kissing her two children.

"Hey, look over there, isn't that the Minister of Magic?" Madison asked the group.

They all looked, standing in front of the never before used Quidditch field was the Minister and his wife.

"And isn't that the new Potions Mistress?" Ginny asked, knowing full well who she was.

"The Minister's wife is the new Potions mistress?" Hannah asked amazed.

"And his son is the Potions Master." Cindy said with a sly smile on her face. "Let's go over and say hello." Cindy added.

"Oh no, that's the Minister of Magic, you just don't go up to him and say hello." Madison argued.

"Why, he's just a person." Cindy argued back.

Mirta began to giggle, she also knew perfectly well that the Minister and his wife were Cindy's grandparents.

"What are you laughing at?" Hannah asked.

"Nothing, I just think Cindy's right, we should go over and say hello." Mirta said, using a complete sentence for the first time since they assembled as a group.

"I'm game, let's go." Kari agreed, she had already deduced who they were to Cindy when she found out Ron Weasley was Cindy's uncle.

The five walked straight up to the Minister and his wife, Cindy was in the lead, with Mirta and Kari at either side, and the two cousins hiding conspicuously behind.

"Hi grandma, hi grandpa," Cindy said, running up to and hugging her grandparents.

"Cindy my dear, how are you? What are you doing wandering around?" Molly asked.

"Just out exploring, you remember my friend Mirta, don't you?" Cindy asked.

"Of course we do, hello Mirta, how are your parents?" Arthur asked in a friendly tone.

"Fine, thank you." Mirta said, shaking both their hands.

"These are our friends; this is Kari Jersey." Cindy motioned to Kari, and she shook both their hands. "This is Madison Roseworth and her cousin Hannah Webster." Cindy added.

"Pleased to meet you all," Arthur said shaking all their hands.

"Are you all going to Hogwarts next year?" Molly asked.

"Yes ma'am, we're all going to be first years." Kari answered for the group.

"Excellent, maybe I'll have the pleasure of some of you in my class." Molly said happily.

"We hope so Mrs. Weasley." Kari said, completely unafraid to talk to the Minister and his wife.

"Cat got your tongues dears?" Molly asked, looking at Madison and Hannah.

"Um, no ma'am, we just never had the honor of talking to the Minister and his wife, ma'am." Hannah answered.

"Oh pish posh, come closer where I can see you." Molly said warmly.

The girls did as they were told; Molly took a good look at them, and then took them in a warm embrace. "There's no reason to stand on ceremony dears, this isn't a State dinner." She said.

"Well grandma, grandpa, we've got to go, much more exploring to do." Cindy said, hugging and kissing her grandparents.

"Be safe Cindy." Arthur said.

"Yes, please be safe dear." Molly agreed.

And the group of five continued on their trek across the fields of tents.

"JJ, good to see you again," Harry said as he stepped outside to see who was ringing the bell on his tent.

"And good to see you too, Harry." JJ said, shaking Harry's hand.

"Bon jour Dominique," Harry said, kissing Dominique once on each cheek.

"Hello Harry, how are you?" She asked in her thick French accent.

"Very well, please come in." Harry said, ushering them inside.

"Ginny, the Jersey's are here." Harry announced them to his wife.

"Welcome, welcome." Ginny exclaimed, as she greeted her guests.  
"Please, have a seat, can I get you anything?" She continued.

"Oh no, thank you, we just ate." JJ answered.

"So what brings you by?" Harry asked, giving JJ a beer that he didn't ask for.

"We just saw Cindy earlier, so we decided to stop by and say hello." JJ explained.

"Well I'm glad you did, I've wanted to talk to you since we met." Harry lied.

"Really, what about," JJ asked politely.

"I wanted to know how things were really going at the DA." Harry lied again.

"How they're really going?" JJ asked for clarification.

"Well Ron typically tells me everything sugar coated; I've wanted to hear the real deal." Harry clarified.

"Well, not much to tell, we have been hearing about several secret societies sprouting up all over the world, and there has been rumors of very old secret societies trying to stop them." JJ explained.

"Really, how do you mean?" Harry asked, now finding the topic quite interesting.

"Well, don't quote me, but recently I heard an ancient secret society ordered the death of another group who was trying to take over illicit activity in their area. We did find twelve dead bodies, all linked to some illegal activity or another, but we can't get anything solid. All we know for sure is that the dead wizards were found decapitated." JJ clarified.

"So you think there may be older organized crime syndicates preventing these newbie's from taking over?" Harry asked.

"I think so, but again, there's no proof." JJ repeated.

Harry just nodded, he had heard similar rumors, but just like JJ said, there was no proof.

"So, how about dinner tonight," Harry asked unexpectedly.

"Dinner, sure, we'd love to, what time?" JJ asked back.

"How about seven," Harry suggested.

"Seven sounds great, but if we're going to make it, Dominique will need time to prepare." JJ lied, knowing he wanted to prepare more than his wife would.

"Excellent, then we'll see you at seven." Harry said standing.

"At seven," JJ agreed, shaking Harry's hand.

The five newly formed gang of first year Hogwarts students were exploring the newly built Quidditch stadium. It had seating for a quarter million spectators, and souvenir booths lining the outside. Cindy and her friends began looking at each individual booth for souvenirs and gifts.

"Hey, here's a model of the entire Cannons team." Kari called out to Cindy.

"And look at these binoculars; they are so cool, much better than the old kind." Madison added.

“We’ll take five.” Cindy said, coming up behind Madison.

“Five, are you crazy, these cost thirty five galleons each.” Kari said from behind the group.

“So, we’ll need them.” Cindy argued, handing the salesman one hundred and seventy five galleons.

“How do you carry so much money and not make any noise? Mirta asked.

“Magic of course,” Cindy said, handing her a set of binoculars.

After the customary thank yous, the group continued on their exploration. They had managed to walk around to the Romanian side of the small mountain, where witches and wizards were lining up to purchase items associated with their team; the Romanian Ridgebacks.

“Hey, isn’t that Professor Krum?” Cindy asked the group.

“Who is Professor Krum?” Hannah asked.

“He’s one of the Hogwarts teachers; my dad introduced us in Diagon Alley.” Cindy explained.

“Maybe we should get closer.” Cindy recommended.

“Why not use the binoculars, they have an audio amplifier?” Hannah asked condescendingly.

“Know-it-all,” Madison said under her breath.

They all put the binoculars up to their eyes, and turned on the audio. Viktor Krum was talking to two hooded wizards, the first was tall and broad, and the second was short and slightly plump.

“Everything is in place master.” Krum said to the shorter of the two.

“Excellent, by this time next year, we will be unstoppable.” The short, plump wizard said.

"And vhat ov de Porter child?" The tall hooded wizard asked.

"The child will be taken precisely on schedule." The shorter wizard responded.

"What was that?" Krum asked, looking in the opposite direction of where the five friends were standing.

"Someone comes me lord." The tall wizard said.

"We shall meet again in two weeks time." The shorter wizard said, and the three disbursed.

"Were they talking about you?" Kari asked.

"I don't think so; I think he said Porter not Potter." Cindy said.

"Yeah, but that could have been just his accent." Kari argued.

"I think we should get back." Mirta said in her small voice.

"Yeah, I agree with the elf." Kari said.

And without a single word the five friends made their way back to the Potter's tent.

"Mom, dad, I'm back," Cindy exclaimed as she entered into the tent.

Cindy entered with her new group of friends in tow. They all plopped down on the overstuffed sofas set up in the tent's sitting room.

"You girls hungry," Ginny asked as she entered the room.

"I am," Cindy said.

"Me too," Kari agreed.

"How about the rest of you," Ginny asked, they all nodded.

"Your mum cooks the meals?" Madison asked as Ginny went to prepare the sandwiches.

"She likes to cook, but usually when we have company, the servants cook." Cindy answered, oblivious to how vain that sounded.

"How many servants do you have?" Kari asked.

"Um, in Lee Castle we have eight muggle servants, and in Potter Castle we have twenty house elves." Cindy explained.

"You have house elves," Mirta asked for clarification.

"Yeah, but they're all free elves, they've always been free, Aunt 'Mione says they're the highest paid elves in the magical community." Cindy clarified.

"Aunt 'Mione, you don't mean Hermione Granger, the founder of elf rights?" Mirta asked.

"Yeah, she and my dad are friends." Cindy answered.

"Best friends, actually," Harry said, walking into the room.

"Hello Mr. Pot, I mean Harry." Madison said, trying to get used to calling the famous Harry Potter by his first name.

"Hello Madison, girls, how was your exploration?" Harry asked, sitting next to Mirta.

"Fun, Cindy bought us binoculars." Kari answered, handing Harry her set.

"Very nice, I'll need to get a set tomorrow." He said staring at the binoculars features.

"We did see something strange." Cindy announced to her father.

"Really, what," Harry asked

"We saw that Professor Krum talking with two hooded wizards." Cindy said, taking a sandwich from the platter her mother was passing around.

"Did you hear what they were saying?" Harry pressed.

"Oh yes, we used the binoculars, they amplify sound." Kari answered.

"Really, then let's see," Harry said, looking into the binoculars and pressing the 'Replay' button.

Harry watched and heard what the three men were saying. "I know that voice." Harry said to himself, prompting the girls to ask who he was. Harry didn't answer at once; he put the binoculars down and looked at his wife.

"Karkaroff, Igor Karkaroff," Harry said simply.

"Isn't he dead?" Ginny asked concerned.

"No one ever found the body." Harry clarified. "And the other voice sounded familiar too, but distorted, almost, Voldemort-like." Harry continued.

Ginny signaled for Harry to follow her into the kitchen, and Harry obliged.

"It's not important, I've got to get back to work, I'll see you girls for dinner." Harry said, handing Kari back her binoculars, and followed Ginny into the kitchen.

"Dinner," Hannah asked.

"Yeah, I've tracked down your parents and invited them to dinner tonight." Harry said smiling.

"Then we've got to go get ready." Madison said to Hannah.

The girls went to their respective tents to prepare for dinner. Cindy went up to her room to do the same. Harry and Ginny began setting up for the occasion.

Harry spent the better part of an hour preparing the first floor of the magical tent. He enlarged the dining area to accommodate the twenty-one people including the children. The small six-person table had also been magically enlarged and chairs were conjured.

Harry sat in the overstuffed chair in the now smaller sitting room listening to the chimes of the large, grandfather clock in the dining area. No sooner had the chimes rang seven, that the guests began arriving.

Harry greeted them like the perfect host he had become, he directed them all to their seats at the dining table and awaited Ginny, the twins and Cindy to come down stairs.

“I love the tent Baron.” Mr. Roseworth said to Harry.

“Thank you, but please, call me Harry.” Harry repeated his litany.

“Thank you Baron, and please, call me Rupert and this is my wife Barbara.” Mr. Roseworth said.

“And I’m Ralph and this is my wife Roberta.” Mr. Webster said.

“And this, ladies and gentlemen is my wife Ginny.” Harry announced, standing while motioning to the beautiful red headed woman who came down the stairs.

Harry took the liberty of introducing everyone in the tent to everyone else; he wanted it clear, for the elves sake, that everyone was equal.

After Harry and Ginny served the meal, they both sat down to eat.

So Rupert, what do you do for a living?” Harry asked politely.

“Banker, that is to say, I own a bank. It’s been in my family for generations.” Rupert answered proudly.

“And you Ralph,” Harry asked him in turn.

“Um, I’m just a reporter for the Quibbler.” He said in an embarrassed tone.

“What do you mean just, the Quibbler is my favorite periodical.” Harry said smiling.

“Really Baron, do you read it often?” Ralph asked, happy to hear Harry enjoyed the magazine.

"I read it every month; the Lovegoods are close personal friends. As a matter of fact, your boss helped me in my campaign against Voldemort." Harry said, and then noticed the surprised looks on their faces.

"You mean what they were writing during that time was the truth?" Rupert asked.

"Yeah, every last word, I used people's prejudice against the Quibbler in a misinformation campaign, and it worked." Harry explained.

Ron and Hermione entered the room as Rupert was trying to absorb this new information.

"Mr. Weasley," JJ exclaimed, standing to greet his superior.

"Hello folks." Ron said warmly.

"Everybody, I'd like you to meet my best friend and brother in law; Ron Weasley and his beautiful wife Hermione." Harry announced, and then turned to the five first year students. "Of course, you lot will call her Professor Weasley, she's a Hogwarts teacher." Harry continued.

The girls, except for Cindy, all sat up perfectly erect as if Hermione would be grading them on their posture. The adults just stood to greet the newcomers.

"I didn't know your wife was a Hogwarts teacher." JJ told Ron as he sat down at the table.

"I don't like to talk about my home life at the office." Ron said distractedly.

Ron was distracted by another pair of newcomers; Dudley Dursley and Parvati Patil. Their arrival wouldn't have normally interested him, but arriving hand in hand certainly did.

After Harry introduced them to the group and they sat down, Ron began talking to Dudley.

"Anything you want to tell me Dudley?" Ron asked him.

"Um yeah, I'm kind of dating your employee." Dudley said nervously, not sure how the wizard would take the news.

Ron sat for a moment contemplating how he felt. His eyes darted back and forth between Dudley and Parvati, but when Ron caught Harry's eyes, he knew he should accept it.

"No problem with me, I was just caught off guard." Ron lied.

After dinner, Harry magically shrank the dining area and magically enlarged the living area. The adults sat down on the comfortable sofas, and began the typical useless diatribe of a typical dinner party.

The five friends went outside and sat talking under the stars.

"Your aunt is going to be one of our teachers?" Hannah asked.

"Yeah, but don't expect any favors, she's as hard as they come." Cindy warned.

"Even so, with her and your grandmother on our side, it certainly would be harder to get into trouble." Kari added.

Cindy decided not to let the others know of her relationship with the Headmistress and Deputy Headmaster. She already felt uncomfortable enough without her friends knowing she knew most of the staff in Hogwarts.

The group talked for another hour before the conversation began to get stale. Cindy was starting to get tired and wanted to go to bed, but as she lay against a tree, listening to Hannah reciting Hogwarts a History, she saw a tall, lean, hooded figure approach.

The hooded figure stopped in front of the five girls and began to remove his hood.

"Uncle Albus!" Cindy exclaimed.

## Chapter 4 – The Quidditch World Cup

“Cindy, my dear,” Albus exclaimed as he took Cindy into a warm embrace. “My how you’ve grown,” he added, smiling down at her.

“Where have you been all this time?” Cindy asked, a lone tear running down her cheek.

“Oh my sweet little girl,” he began, wiping the tear from her face. “I’ve been so busy visiting old friends and family, I don’t have the time to visit as much as I would like.” He said apologetically.

“I’ve missed you.” She said, hugging him harder.

“And I’ve missed you too.” He said smiling again.

“Don’t you age at all?” A voice asked from the edge of the tent.

“Well if it isn’t the Baron of Lee?” Albus said with a small laugh.

Harry wasted no more time on small talk; he walked right up to Albus and embraced him like the grandfather he had been to him.

“Retirement suits you.” Harry said simply.

“And fame and wealth suits you.” Albus retorted happily.

“Come inside old friend, we have much to catch up on.” Harry beckoned him.

“Wait daddy, I want to introduce Uncle Albus to my new friends.” Cindy said quickly, dragging Albus to the group of girls by the tree next to the tent. “Uncle Albus, this is Kari, Hannah, Madison and Mirta, girls; this is Albus Dumbledore.” She said, introducing them.

“The Albus Dumbledore, the famous wizard and former Headmaster of Hogwarts?” Hannah asked.

“The Albus Dumbledore,” Cindy replied proudly.

The girls shook Albus' hand apprehensively; they seemed to think just touching him would cause some magical shock to their systems. Albus actually laughed at the spectacle.

Harry beckoned him again to the tent; Albus nodded his good byes and followed him in. If Albus thought that meeting the adults would be any different, he was sadly mistaken.

"Attention everybody, we have another guest." Harry bellowed as he entered the tent.

All eyes turned to look at the newcomer; all but Dudley froze in place. Dudley actually seemed frightened of Albus; he actually took two steps back when Albus entered.

Ginny, Ron and Hermione literally leapt to their feet and ran the length of the tent to greet the newcomer.

"Albus, it's been so long," Hermione cried as she hugged him tightly.

"It is good to see you as well Hermione." Albus said smiling.

"You've been away too long." Ginny scolded him, as she hugged him as tightly as Hermione.

"I'm sorry Ginny; I try to get back as often as I can." Albus apologized.

"Damn, I'm still not taller than you." Ron joked as he hugged his old Headmaster.

"Nor as smart," Albus joked back.

Harry guided Albus to the other guests and began to introduce them, Harry almost laughed out load when they approached Dudley.

"Dudley, this is our old Headmaster, Albus Dumbledore." Harry said, holding back a laugh.

"P P pleased t t to m m meet you." Dudley stuttered, shaking Albus' hand.

"Mr. Dursley, I haven't seen you since you were a baby, my how you've grown." Albus said in a jovial tone.

"Th th thank y you." Dudley responded.

Harry had everyone reseat themselves, and began the obligatory boring dinner conversation.

After some rather boring tales from Dumbledore, the group began to thin out. By two o'clock in the morning, the only remaining adults were Harry, Ginny, Albus, Ron and Hermione, all the others had left.

"Now Albus tell me, what's really been going on around the world?" Harry asked.

Albus looked around the room once, and began to speak. "Someone's rising to power; there have been rumors all over Europe of a dark wizard recruiting other dark wizards." He answered.

"Yes, we've been hearing the same things, but we haven't been able to put a name or face to the rumors." Ron agreed.

"Well whoever it is, he's here, at the cup." Harry said, almost absentmindedly.

"Here?" Albus asked astounded.

"Yeah, Cindy and the girls stumbled upon him and two of his minions earlier today." Harry added.

"What happened, what were they doing?" Albus pressed him.

"Here, see for yourself." Harry said, handing him Cindy's binoculars.

The group waited until Albus finished, and then Ron snatched them from Dumbledore.

"You don't think Cindy's in any danger, do you?" Albus asked Harry.

"Cindy? Of course not, I pity any wizard who crosses her; they'll never know what hit them." Harry said, almost sounding amused.

"But she's still only a little girl." Dumbledore pressed concernedly.

"Trust me Albus, if you thought, even for a moment that she was a powerful witch the last time you saw her, she's even worse now. I would put her up against Riddle himself; she could probably defeat him without working up a sweat." Harry said sounding more serious than any of them had heard from him in a long while.

"Why that f-ing git," Ron blurted out.

"Who," Hermione asked, taking the binoculars from him.

A moment later she knew exactly who. "Viktor," she said simply.

"Not just Krum, the other man, I don't know if you recognized him, that was Karkaroff." Harry explained, catching Ron and Hermione by surprise.

"Ah, you recognized him too, excellent. Our missing former Headmaster of Durmstrang has returned." Dumbledore said, almost sounding amused.

"Did you recognize the third man?" Hermione asked Dumbledore.

"No, unfortunately I have not. How about you Harry?" Dumbledore asked, tuning to Harry.

"The voice sounds oddly familiar, but distorted somehow, I think I know the man under the hood, but unless I see his face, I'll never know for sure." Harry explained.

"So the new Dark Lord is here, talking about the Porter child, and you're not nervous?" Dumbledore asked Harry and Ginny.

"Albus, believe me when I say, Cindy is with us, here at the match, she is going to be at Hogwarts in a couple of weeks, there is no way this Dark Lord or any dark lord is going to come close enough to do her any harm." Ginny paused, and a look more terrifying than any of them would have dreamed crossed Ginny's face. "I guarantee it." She added.

"Please excuse my wife, she takes taking care of the children a little farther than most mothers." Harry said amused, as he made his way towards Ginny, and placed his arms around her.

"I know I, would never cross my sister." Ron interjected smiling. "I put her up against a dozen of my best men; two are still recovering in St. Mungo's." He added in an amused tone.

"I think we should forget about this whole dark lord business for tonight, and get some sleep; the Quidditch World Cup is in a few hours." Hermione piped in.

"Agreed," Dumbledore agreed standing.

"I'll show you to your bedroom, and we'll continue this after we win the Cup." Harry told Dumbledore.

The group broke up for the evening, Ron and Hermione went to their tent, Albus remained with the Potters. The next morning would be the start of the Cup, and despite the presence of the new dark lord, they were all looking forward to it.

The morning broke clear and bright, it was amounting to be a perfect Quidditch day. Harry and Albus were up before the rest of the tent, Harry was cooking breakfast and Albus was reading the Daily Prophet. Neither of them spoke of the events or the revelations of the previous day, nor would they until after the game was over.

Harry laid the last of the breakfast on the table as Albus put the newspaper down.

"Would you like me to call everyone to breakfast?" Albus asked politely.

Harry closed his eyes for a moment, and then opened them again.

"Done," Harry said, sitting at the head of the table.

Dumbledore was about to make a comment when Cindy and the twins came running down the stairs.

The twins froze when they saw Dumbledore.

“Uncle Albus!” They exclaimed together.

“Children,” he exclaimed back.

They ran up to him and hugged him tightly.

“Where have you been?” Molly asked angrily.

“Oh, I’ve been here and there, you’re not angry with me, are you?” Albus said.

Molly looked at him with her big green eyes, flipped her flowing red hair and smiled.

“No, I’m not mad, I’ve just missed you.” She said, hugging him again.

“Now, now kids, let the man breathe.” Harry said, pulling the twins off Dumbledore, and escorting them to their chairs.

“Good morning everybody,” Ginny said, slowly walking down the stairs.

“Good morning.” The group said as one.

The group stuffed themselves with the large breakfast Harry had cooked, and then went their separate ways to dress.

The game, which was now set for noon that day, was approaching with blinding speed. The Potters and Dumbledore spent the entire morning talking about the former Headmaster’s travels and adventures, the twins in particular were riveted to their seats as Albus spoke of goblins, giants and trolls. Harry had to force the conversation to a close.

“It’s time everyone, let’s get ready to go.” Harry said, standing from the comfortable sofa.

“Oh daddy, just one more story,” Cindy begged.

“No, we’re already late.” Harry pressed.

The group rose and exited the tent. They followed the hoards of people walking the path to the new, unused Quidditch pitch that Harry had built just for this occasion.

Harry led the group to the highest box of the Chudley Cannons side of the field. The box, which was set up for twenty people, was completely open with a magical field that shielded it from the elements and stray bludgers.

When the group entered the box, they found Ron, Hermione, Arthur and Molly already in their seats. The twins ran up to their namesakes, and began a barrage of hugs and kisses. Cindy took her seat in the front row, and began scanning the crowd for her friends.

The seats were five across and four deep. Rather than regular stadium seating, as the rest of the pitch, this box had leather recliners with the necessary room to stretch your legs and lay back.

The box also had its own servants, wizarding wireless and loo. Three elves were used to ensure the guests were well cared for, and would not want for anything.

As the guests continued to discuss the impending match, the remaining guests began to arrive sporadically. First to arrive were the Weasley twins; Fred and George, followed by Remus and Katie, and their children, and then finally Sirius, Tonks, Dudley and Parvati.

When the clock struck twelve, the announcer's voice rang through the pitch.

"Ladies and Gentlemen, I am Lee Jordan, and welcome to the Quidditch World Cup." The announcer exclaimed, with his voice amplified magically. "Today's match, the Chudley Cannons versus the Romanian Ridgebacks," the announcer continued. After the cheers died down, he began again, "the home team today will be the Romanian Ridgebacks, who will be announced second, so without further ado, here are your Chudley Cannons!" Lee exclaimed.

As Lee was announcing the Cannons, Harry took the opportunity to talk to Ron. "How did Lee convince you to let him announce?" Harry asked amusingly.

"Months of begging and pleading, in the end, it was because our regular announcer came down with a cold." Ron answered smiling.

"He must be in his glory." Harry pointed out.

"You have no idea, he's spent the last two days singing and dancing around the office, that's why I left early yesterday." Ron added.

"I'm glad I wasn't there, I've heard Lee sing." Harry joked.

"Oh, I forgot to mention, our starting seeker got injured during practice the other day, we have a reserve in." Ron declared, pointing to the player that was just announced.

Harry looked up in time to see a small creature, with large eyes and ears riding on a broom; Dobby.

"Dobby," Harry exclaimed, as he jumped to his feet.

"I thought I'd surprise you." Ron said smiling.

"Consider me surprised, but not everyone." Harry added as he looked at his wife, who had obviously known.

"He wouldn't do it without the leave of his master or mistress, so I asked Ginny." Ron said sheepishly.

Harry noticed the only people cheering were a small band of elves sitting in a corner box almost at ground level.

"Not very popular, is he?" Harry said more than asked.

"He will be, you just watch." Ron said cryptically.

An hour later the game was finally under way, the Cannon's chasers were completely outmatched by the Romanians, but to their credit, they fought for every point they received.

In the first ten minutes of the match, Romania had scored sixty points and the Cannons only ten. The Romanian beaters were relentless against Dobby and the Cannon's beaters did absolutely nothing to

stop them. Three times in those first ten minutes Dobby had to dive for the ground to avoid being hit by a bludger.

By the end of the first three hours, the Romanians were up 260 to 60, even if Dobby would somehow be able to catch the snitch, the Cannons would still lose.

"This is embarrassing." Ron said, turning around to face Harry.

Ron saw the unmistakable yellow eyes of the griffin, he almost shrieked in terror.

"Harry, what are you doing?" Ron asked quickly.

"Watching the snitch," Harry answered simply.

It dawned on Ron what Harry meant, his eyesight as a griffin was several times better than his eyesight as a human.

"Can you see it?" Ron asked.

"Our side, top ring post, halfway up. It's staying out of play." Harry answered emotionlessly.

Ron grabbed Cindy's binoculars and looked where Harry had directed him. A small speck of gold was hovering several meters above the ground behind the center post of the Cannons goal.

"Ron, you're being obvious." Harry said to Ron.

Ron quickly gave the binoculars back to Cindy, and searched out Dobby with his eyes.

Harry watched as the Cannon's beaters did nothing to help their seeker against the endless barrage of bludgers that the opposing team was hitting his way.

"Dobby, dive straight down, bludger," Harry said in his mind, causing Dobby to obey his command, narrowly missing the bludger Dobby did not see flying straight at his head.

"That's it, now I'm pissed. Dobby, I know you can hear me, so listen. Don't just sit around looking for the snitch, start flying around and breaking up the Romanian's scoring drives, do everything you can to keep them from scoring." Harry commanded.

"Yes sir." Dobby responded in his mind, and took off after the Romanian chasers who were now in control of the quaffle.

With Dobby's small frame, and almost nonexistent weight, he caught up to the chasers easily, turned his broom in front of the lead chaser, and forced him into the center ring. He fell unconscious to the ground, the Romanians called time out.

Dobby was waived in for a team meeting, but ignored the coach, and continued to look for the snitch.

When play resumed, Dobby again began the task of keeping the Romanian chasers from getting near the Cannon's goal posts. Within just thirty minutes of play, the score had gone from a 200 point deficit to only a 160 point deficit.

Dobby watched as the Romanian beaters each hit a bludger simultaneously at Dobby, his beaters were still nowhere to be seen. Dobby used that opportunity to turn the tides, he shot after the three chasers that were heading towards the Cannon's goal once again, this time, rather than cutting them off, Dobby flew right in between the chasers. Seeing an opportunity to rid themselves of this pest, they made to ram him on either side. Dobby waited until they had committed themselves completely, and then shot out from between them. Just as they were about to hit each other, they were both instead; hit by bludgers in the back of their heads, making them both fall painfully to the ground, prompting another time out. Neither Dobby nor the rest of the team heard the chanting from the crowd, the Cannon's fans were all cheering for Dobby.

This time, the Romanian chasers would not be getting back on their brooms, they were out for the game. The Cannons were now facing one chaser, both beaters, the keeper and seeker, but even that would be changing soon.

"Dobby, it's time for the seeker." Harry communicated to Dobby, who understood completely.

Dobby made like he was after the remaining chaser, then turned abruptly and headed towards his own goal posts. The Romanian seeker saw his maneuver, and took off after Dobby. Dobby began to extend his arm little by little, trying to catch a snitch that wasn't there, but the Romanian couldn't see clearly, he only knew he had to catch the snitch first, he had lost count of the score and wasn't sure if the Cannons would win if Dobby caught the snitch. The Romanian finally caught up to Dobby, and extended his arm in front of Dobby's, just then, Dobby turned upward like a rocket, and pulled out almost as fast. The Romanian had no chance, he ploughed right into the side of the pitch, and fell unconscious immediately, and the seeker was gone as well.

The Romanian beaters had to turn their attention to the Cannon's chasers, they had to keep them from scoring, they had hoped if they could keep the score down low enough, maybe the seeker and chasers could heal in time, and resume the game.

Dobby spent the rest of the game in search of the snitch. He listened as his team score increased and increased throughout the game. The score was now the Cannons 300, and the Ridgebacks 260, and then it happened, Dobby saw a streak of gold flash passed one of the Romanian beaters. Dobby wasted no time, he shot like a bullet towards the Romanian beater, the beater saw Dobby coming, and began to panic, he thought he was after him.

The beater, turned and fled the area, leaving Dobby a clear line to the snitch, then Dobby pulled up, a gold, winged ball struggling in his hand, he had caught the snitch.

"The Cannons win!" Lee Jordan exclaimed, and the Quidditch pitch erupted in applause and cheers.

Dobby did not go to the rest of the team to celebrate, he went straight to the owners box where his Master; Harry Potter was seated.

Harry saw him approaching, and removed the protective shield around the box so Dobby could enter. Dobby landed, and went straight to Harry.

"Dobby thanks you sir, Dobby thanks you." He said breathlessly.

"You're welcome." Harry said smiling at the watery eyes of his long time friend and caretaker.

"You should go celebrate with your team." The Minister declared.

"Oh no he should not! Not after the way he was treated." Hermione said indignantly.

"She's right Dobby, your place is here with us." Ron agreed.

"Then Dobby will stay," Dobby said to his employer.

"But you have to go get your trophy." Fred pointed out.

"Our trophy," Ron corrected him.

The night of the thirty first of August, Harry had arranged for a large dinner party at Potter Castle. He wanted everyone who could make it to visit Cindy before the big day, Hogwarts day.

Harry invited all the teachers Cindy was already acquainted with as well as the Headmistress herself; Minerva McGonagall. Even Albus Dumbledore himself was due to attend.

"She already knows how things are supposed to work. She knows how to speak to the professors and the Headmistress, why this party?" Ginny asked Harry.

"I'm doing this more for the adults than for Cindy. I think they are all uncomfortable with the prospect of teaching her, mainly because of who she is, but also because of what she is. And I want to lay down any concerns they may have." Harry explained.

"I disagree completely, I don't think they're concerned at all, but if it makes you happy, I'll go along." Ginny said begrudgingly.

Before long, the house was buzzing with activity; guests were arriving from every possible entry. Harry had invited all the family members as well as the professors who currently taught at Hogwarts.

"Damn Harry, who did you invite?" Ron asked as he helped himself to the shrimp.

"Everybody; you and Hermione, your parents, all your brothers and sisters and their spouses, Neville and Luna, Gabrielle, McGonagall, Flitwick, Hagrid, Draco and his wife Rebecca, Remus, Katie and the kids, Dumbledore and of course Sirius and Tonks." Harry answered, making sure to account for everyone.

"What, you didn't invite Trelawney or Binns?" Ron asked sarcastically.

"No, but I was going to invite Myrtle." Harry said honestly.

"You would," Ron added condescendingly.

"Quite a turnout," McGonagall said as she joined Harry and Ron.

"I just wanted everyone to feel more at ease about Cindy." Harry told her honestly.

"Do you feel they're not at ease?" McGonagall asked.

"Honestly Minerva, no, I think all the teachers feel threatened by her, well all but Severus." Harry added.

"Don't be concerned about us Harry, we know Cindy wouldn't hurt anyone who wasn't a threat to her or the school, we have the utmost confidence in her and her abilities." McGonagall explained.

"But I'm sure you've either had a meeting already, or have one planned in her honor." Harry said knowingly.

"Well, a witch of her caliber would require such attention." McGonagall added.

"When is the meeting?" Harry pressed.

"Tomorrow morning in my office." She said emotionlessly.

"Then I would ask a small favor, don't include anyone who is not in this house tonight." Harry asked.

"And why is that Harry?" McGonagall asked.

"Let's just say I have concerns about at least one of your new teachers, and I'm sure Albus would concur." Harry said, nodding to the man who had just joined them.

"I do concur Minerva, I'm sure you understand the importance of secrecy." Albus agreed.

"Very well, I shall only call for the teachers in this room, but if my students or school is in any danger, I fully expect to be informed." McGonagall added in no uncertain terms.

"Of course Headmistress." Albus said smiling.

"Besides, you always have my goddaughter to protect you." Ron said grinning.

"Be nice Ron." Hermione warned.

"Ah, my beautiful sister in law, welcome to the festivities." Harry said, kissing Hermione on the lips.

"Yes, I think Hermione will ensure her godchild's conformity." Albus said, looking at Hermione.

"Conformity is overrated Albus, I think she should be given a wide berth." Hermione said, startling the small group.

"Mrs. Weasley, surely you can't be serious." McGonagall said.

"I am, I'm not saying she should be free to run the school, I'm just saying she should be given the same considerations her father was given. She is without a doubt the most powerful witch in the world, and barring her father, she is the most powerful human being on the planet, if she's going to grow as a witch and a woman, we have to give her as many concessions as we can without disrupting the rest of the school." Hermione explained her viewpoint.

"Perhaps this is a discussion for the meeting tomorrow, we'll continue this there." McGonagall said leaving no doubt the conversation was over.

"Harry, may I speak to you in private?" Dumbledore asked.

"Of course Albus, how about my old war room?" Harry asked back.

"Yes, that would be splendid." Dumbledore said, leading Harry through the library to the old war room.

The war room had obviously remained unused in all the years since Voldemort, dust had settled in corners despite the house elves valiant efforts to clean. Dumbledore took a seat opposite Harry's old desk, and waited a moment for Harry to join him.

"What can I do for you?" Harry asked, sitting down.

"I've wanted to ask you something since the night before the Quidditch match, what do you know about Cindy?" Dumbledore asked his now famous open-ended question.

"What do I know about her, everything since I adopted her." Harry answered.

"And what about before you adopted her?" Albus pressed.

"Not much, just what the orphanage told me about her. Why?" Harry asked back.

"I'm not sure, but there is a striking similarity between Cindy and your other daughter Molly, very striking. Not to mention how much she looks like you and Ginny, it's rather intriguing." Dumbledore explained.

"Yeah, I've been hearing that a lot, complete strangers are saying how much she looks like me, so much so that I hired both a magical and muggle private investigator to research her background." Harry said confidentially.

"So you have noticed." Dumbledore stated the obvious.

"Yes sir I have, I just didn't think anybody else had noticed, but I should have expected you would, nothing gets by you." Harry said smiling.

"I highly recommend you keep on top of this, I have a very bad feeling." Dumbledore confided.

"So do I," Harry agreed.

Dumbledore stood and walked over to the plotting board in the middle of the room. He stared at the small dots floating across the map of the world.

"You used to keep track of every Dark Auror on the planet." Dumbledore observed needlessly.

"And maybe I should start again." Harry said, walking up to him.

"Maybe you should." Dumbledore agreed.

They both made their way back to the party, all the guests had arrived, and the house was louder than any had heard in quite a while. Harry smiled to himself as he watched how the groups were spread apart. The only ones who did not seem to be enjoying themselves were Percy and his fiancée Doris Cappa.

"Having a smashing time?" Harry asked sarcastically.

"Harry, it's been too long." Doris said, hugging Harry tightly.

"How've you been," Harry asked her.

"Quite well, but extremely busy, the Department of Education is severely short staffed, and I keep working late into the night." She said honestly.

"Well I'm sure you're in good company." Harry said, motioning to Percy.

"Who him, he lives at the Ministry, I've given up on trying to get him to come home." Doris said smiling.

"I am the Deputy Minister of Magic, I have responsibilities." Percy said indignantly.

"Maybe so, but even the Minister finds time for his family." Doris said angrily, evidently reliving a previous argument.

"Come now, this is a party, let's have fun." Harry said, dragging Doris to the dance floor.

"I'm sorry Harry, but Percy just doesn't let up, he works night and day." Doris apologized as Harry spun her around the dance floor.

"I know, but if you want Percy to relax, tell his father, he'll order Percy to take a holiday." Harry recommended as they continued to dance.

"Good idea, I'll hit him up later." Doris said realizing Harry's idea had merits.

"Good, now have a good time, that's an order." Harry said smiling.

"Yes sir." She answered playfully.

When the song ended, Harry escorted Doris back to her moping fiancé, and excused himself from them, and sought out Ginny.

Hermione, Ginny and Katie were gathered in a corner away from all the children. Hermione was talking animatedly about her lesson plan for the year.

"I can't wait to see how the first years handle all that." Hermione was saying to the other two.

"It certainly sounds harder than when I was a first year." Katie said.

"Me too, are you sure they can handle it?" Ginny asked.

"Oh trust me, I'm sure the first years these days can handle anything." Hermione explained.

"Were you serious about giving Cindy certain concessions?" Ginny asked, having heard about it from Ron.

"Yes I was, Ron, Harry and I had many dangerous and enjoyable experiences in Hogwarts, I think Cindy should have them too. We could never have stopped Voldemort had we stuck to the rules all those years, and with the rise of some new Dark Lord, I think Cindy should be allowed the same latitude we received." Hermione explained.

"What Dark Lord?" Katie asked.

"And she's a Dark Auror." Ginny pointed out jokingly.

"We all suspect a new Dark Lord is taking power, Cindy managed to capture him on video the day before the Quidditch World Cup." Hermione explained.

"And one of the new Hogwarts teachers was there." Ginny added.

"Who?" Katie asked quickly.

"Krum, and his old Headmaster, Karkaroff." Hermione answered.

"And they're still allowing him to teach?" Katie asked shocked.

"Well there is really no proof of anything, they really didn't say anything incriminating, at least nothing that would stick in court." Ginny said.

"Well I sincerely hope someone's going to keep an eye on him." Katie added.

"And I'm hoping that someone would be you." Harry said to Hermione.

"Me? Are you sure? Ron might get a little upset." Hermione said nervously.

"Then don't tell him. We all remember how Krum had fallen for you in our fourth year, I think with a little coaxing, he'll fall head over heals again. I don't want you to pry, or let him think you want something, just let him befriend you, and nature will do the rest." Harry explained.

"Harry, I'm a married woman." Hermione said shocked.

"I'm not asking you to cheat on your husband Hermione, I'm just asking you to be friendly to an old school chum." Harry said vaguely.

"And listen to everything he has to say I presume." Hermione added, catching on.

"And report it to me, Albus or Ron." Harry added.

"Very well, I'll do it. At least I'll be able to keep him away from Cindy." Hermione justified.

"I wouldn't be too concerned with Cindy, I don't think they're after her." Harry said honestly.

"But what about the video?" Ginny asked.

"I can't explain it, but I just don't think they were talking about Cindy." Harry said, seemingly deep in thought.

"Fir's years, fir's years this way." They heard a booming voice from behind them.

"Hagrid," they all exclaimed.

"Sorry, jus' practicin'." Hagrid joked.

"Good to see you old friend." Harry said, hugging Hagrid around the midsection.

"You too 'Arry, you too." Hagrid replied, squeezing Harry lightly.

"You still escorting the first years to the castle?" Katie asked, knowing he was a fully qualified wizard now.

"Yeah, I love that job, it's me favorite." Hagrid explained.

"But it's professor Hagrid now." Harry added.

"Nah, jus' Hagrid, I don't like that professor stuff." Hagrid said sheepishly.

"Any big hairy monsters on the agenda for the first years?" Harry asked jokingly.

"Nah, just unicorns, phoenixes and griffins. You wanna help out with the griffin class dis year 'Arry?" Hagrid asked hopefully.

"Yeah, maybe, been having trouble getting any?" Harry asked back.

"Yeah, hard to come by, griffins, especially the golden kind." Hagrid said.

"Let me know when you need me, and I'll be there." Harry said, patting his friend on the back.

"Thanks 'Arry, I'll call ya." Hagrid said excitedly.

Harry left Hagrid with the girls, and continued to mingle around the party. He spent some time with his mother and father in law, with Bill, Fleur and Gabrielle, and almost froze when he saw Draco and Rebecca.

"You're pregnant," Harry exclaimed when he saw her.

"Very observant Potter, she's only eight months pregnant." Draco said sarcastically.

"Draco, I didn't think you had it in you, or is it the neighbor's too." Harry joked.

"Keep it up Potter." Draco warned jokingly.

"Oh come on Draco, I know it's no the neighbor's, it's mine?" Harry joked again.

"You, I still have doubts about the ones that call you daddy." Draco continued their banter.

Harry laughed; he enjoyed nothing as much as Draco's company. Harry smiled and kissed Rebecca, then turned towards Draco.

"You kiss me, and I'll belt you one." Draco warned.

“Oh but Draco, you’re so sexy.” Harry said sarcastically.

“Get away from me, my wife’s all I need.” Draco said, taking his wife in a loving embrace.

“May I have a moment?” Harry heard the voice of Severus Snape.

“Of course Severus.” Harry answered, walking to a quiet corner.

“I just wanted you to know I’d be looking out for Cindy. I know you’re concerned about her, shall we say, talents, but take solace, I will watch out for her.” Severus said consolingly.

“Thank you old friend, it really means a lot to me knowing you’re watching over her.” Harry said honestly.

“But just so as we’re clear, I will be treating her, less than equally.” Severus said in his Snape-like voice.

“Don’t worry Severus, I know what you mean, and I’ll be taking no offense, but Ginny, that’s another story.” Harry added as he turned to leave, leaving Snape with a look of utter terror on his face.

The night began to come to a close, Harry felt certain that none of the teachers harbored any concerns about Cindy, and what he was feeling was his own doubt. But watching Cindy interact with everyone at the party, Harry no longer had any doubts; Cindy was ready for Hogwarts, ready to take on the next big adventure.

Harry and Ginny waited by the door to the ballroom as the guests made their way to the various exits. Harry and Ginny wished them all a good night as they passed. When they were all gone from the room, Harry followed Ginny into the kitchen for a bite.

“Feeling better?” Ginny asked Harry.

“You know what, I am.” Harry answered smiling.

“Good, now don’t doubt our daughter ever again.” Ginny warned, sounding very serious.

"Yes Ginny dear." Harry said, gaining a slap from his wife.

"I'm serious Harry, you have to have more faith in her, she's not just strong in magic, she's strong in every way." Ginny said, taking Harry in an embrace.

"I'm sorry Ginny, I'll never doubt my family again." Harry added, before kissing Ginny deeply.

"Do you think she'll try to teach the other children?" Ginny asked.

"Of course she will. The question is, how will the staff handle it?" Harry said.

"The staff will deal with it, or they'll answer to me." Ginny said, all joking aside.

"That's what I wanted to hear." Harry answered.

"So, want to try and knock me up again?" Ginny asked coyly.

"You're already knocked up, so I'm going to have to try really hard." Harry said in his most bedroom voice.

"That's what I'm hoping for." Ginny said as they both apparated to the bedroom.

Cindy was still up in her room. She was stroking Hedwig absentmindedly as her father had done a thousand times before.

"I'm scared Hedwig, I've never been away from home for so long. I know I'll have my friends with me, but what if they're in a different house, or I am, what if no one likes me. What if I'm not good in school, oh Hedwig, I'm so scared." She told her owl.

Hedwig just hooted softly, he expected many more sleepless nights with Cindy

## Chapter 5 – The Hogwarts Express

The morning of September 1st finally arrived. Cindy was frantically packing the trunk she would be taking to Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry. Harry and Ginny, the night before, had apparated the entire family and their belongings to a flat they kept in London.

The Potter twins; Arthur and Molly, watched with great amusement as both their mother and sister ran around the large, loft flat as they attempted to pack all of Cindy's new clothes.

"Daddy, are they going crazy?" Arthur asked his father.

"Yes my son, I believe they are." Harry answered in an amused tone.

"Why are they going crazy?" Molly asked.

"They're trying to make sure Cindy doesn't leave anything behind while she's at school." Harry explained to his youngest daughter.

"How long will Cindy be gone?" Molly pressed.

"Oh, about ten months," Harry answered, knowing she would probably not understand.

"Is that a lot?" Arthur asked.

"No son, not a lot." Harry lied.

Ginny and Cindy plopped down on the couch opposite Harry and the twins. Evidently the entertainment was over.

"Done," Ginny announced.

"You sure you packed everything?" Harry asked in a knowing tone.

"What, what did we forget?" Ginny asked nervously.

"Oh, I don't know, maybe that beautiful white bird perched on top of the refrigerator." Harry said smiling.

"Hedwig!" Cindy exclaimed running back upstairs to get Hedwig's cage.

"How much time do we have left?" Ginny asked her husband.

Harry looked at his watch. "Plenty, the cars will be here in three minutes." Harry said calmly.

"Three minutes! We've got to get moving!" Ginny exclaimed, jumping back up off the sofa.

Harry stood and walked to the window, he watched as two stretch limousines pulled up in front of the entrance to the flat.

Harry turned, and with a wave of his hand, the trunk, broom and Hedwig and his cage were transported to the cars.

"Arthur, Molly, go get your grandparents, it's time to leave." Harry told his twin children.

"Yes daddy." They said together, jumping off the sofa.

"Cindy! Ginny! The cars are here." Harry called up to them.

"We can't find Hedwig's cage." Cindy said frantically, running back down the stairs.

"Don't worry, I already transported it to the car." Harry explained, with a hint of humor.

"Arthur," Harry said to his father in law who had just walked in from his bedroom, "you'll be in the first car with Molly and the twins, Ginny and I will ride in the second car with Cindy." Harry explained his plan.

"Perfect, I'll meet you downstairs." Arthur said, taking the twins in tow.

"I'll meet you all downstairs!" Harry called up to the Ginny, Cindy and Molly.

"That's fine Harry dear; I'll make sure they hurry." Molly said humorously.

Harry rode the lift down the six stories to the ground floor. When he stepped out into the warm September sun, he felt a rush of contentment with his daughter off to Hogwarts, and his wife pregnant once again, life was good.

When the driver approached Harry, he knew in an instant Ginny had called for her cars and not Harry's. A large wizard dressed in brown robes walked up to Harry, and thrust his hand out.

"Mr. Potter, a pleasure." The man said formally.

"Just Harry and you are?" Harry asked.

"Joseph Deter, I've been your wife's driver for two months." The man said, still sounding official.

"Pleased to meet you, I presume these are magical cars?" Harry asked.

"With the most sophisticated magic available, the trip to King's Cross station should only take five to ten minutes depending on when the vehicle is out of muggle view." Joseph said.

"That's just fine. Ah, I see the women are here." Harry said without turning around, as Molly, Ginny and Cindy emerged from the door.

"Ready?" Ginny asked.

"Whenever you are," Harry said simply.

"Let's go, oh, hello Joseph." Ginny said, noticing the driver.

"Miss Ginny." The man answered simply.

Harry, Ginny and Cindy jumped into the second car, as Molly joined Arthur and the twins in the first car.

"Once the Hogwarts Express is gone, we'll jump back in the cars and head for Hogsmeade to drop mum off." Ginny explained to Harry.

"Why don't we all just go to Hogsmeade?" Cindy asked.

"Then you'll miss the best part of the year, the ride on the train. I met Uncle Ron and Aunt Hermione on that train my first year, and I met your mother on the platform." Harry explained.

"But I already know my friends, we could just skip it." Cindy argued.

"Nonsense, you'll have many more friends then just the four you know, trust me, besides, you don't really want to show up to school with mommy and daddy, do you?" Ginny argued.

"No, I guess not." Cindy said dejectedly.

"We're here Miss Ginny." The driver announced.

Both vehicles emptied and their occupants headed for platform nine and three quarters. As they approached the barrier between platforms nine and ten, Harry took Cindy aside.

"That's the barrier; try not to let anyone see you pass." Harry explained.

Cindy nodded and followed Ginny towards the barrier, in an instant, the group was standing on platform nine and three quarters, with the scarlet engine of the Hogwarts Express staring back at them.

"We still have twenty minutes." Ginny declared.

"Not to worry dear, we'll just load her trunk and watch as the new students arrive." Molly said simply.

After the trunk, broom and cage were loaded, Cindy stood next to her parents as they watched the students arriving through the barrier.

First to join the group were Mirta and her family. Harry began talking to Merd about the Quidditch World Cup, which Merd enjoyed thoroughly.

"An elf won the World Cup, and what an elf, he was unstoppable." Merd told Harry.

"What an elf, indeed, Dobby's one of my best friends." Harry explained to Merd.

"That's the house elf you became friends with?" Merd asked astonished.

"Yes, and I would do anything for him, without him, I'd probably be dead, and Voldemort would be ruling the planet." Harry said matter-of-factly.

With the arrival of Kari and her family, and Hannah and Madison, Cindy's circle of friends was complete. The horn from the Hogwarts Express signified the time to board. The girls went to their respective parents, and Cindy went to both her parents and grandparents.

"It's time." Cindy said sadly.

"Don't be sad my daughter, by tomorrow you won't even be thinking about us, have a great year." Harry said, kissing Cindy lightly on the lips.

"Have fun dear, and I'll see you in school." Molly said, kissing her on the cheek.

"My beautiful daughter, all grown up, do take care of yourself, and try to have fun." Ginny said, also kissing her lightly on the lips.

"I'll come by to see you when I can, don't forget how much we love you." Arthur said, kissing her on the top of her head.

"Us too," the twins exclaimed as they jumped on Cindy.

"Ok, that's enough; it's time for her to go." Harry said as Cindy turned to leave.

She walked to the train with her new friends, Mirta, Kari, Hannah and Madison, none of them would be seeing their families until Christmas, and without another word, they all boarded the train.

Harry, Ginny, the twins, Arthur and Molly all made their way back through the crowded station to the cars that waited for them in front of

the building. Harry and Ginny took the second car again as Arthur and Molly took the twins with them in the lead car.

"I'm sad." Ginny told Harry as the cars pulled away from the station.

"Me too, but we all knew this day would come." Harry said, trying to console his wife.

"I wonder if this is how my mother felt the day Bill went off to Hogwarts the first time." Ginny said, trying to get control of her emotions.

"I'm sure it is she's a very loving woman." Harry observed.

"Some day all our children will be gone." Ginny continued.

"But we'll always have each other." Harry pointed out.

"This compartment is empty." Kari said, as she looked into the fifth compartment.

"Good enough for me." Cindy said, entering the compartment.

"When is the sorting?" Kari asked Hannah.

"Right before the welcoming feast, just after we get inside." Hannah said without looking up from her book.

"Do you think we'll all be in the same house?" Cindy asked.

"Probably not, Hannah and Madison will probably be in Ravenclaw, Mirta will either be in Hufflepuff or maybe Dubois House, you probably Gryffindor or maybe Slytherin and me, either Slytherin or Romanoff." Kari answered honestly.

"So how will we see each other?" Cindy asked.

"Well the school is set up differently than when our parents went there, the houses no longer attend class as a unit, they are all mixed together by year, then cut in half, so every class has members from all the houses in that year." Hannah explained.

"So there are two teachers for every class, we could all get Professor Snape for Defense Against the Dark Arts, or we could all get Professor Krum." Madison added.

"What about our time off?" Cindy pressed.

"Well the common rooms are still by house, but now there are common areas where students from different houses can meet and socialize." Hannah answered.

"The meals are still by house, aren't they?" Mirta asked.

"No, the tables are now by year, not by house, so we can still eat together." Hannah said.

"But not the welcoming, Halloween, or leaving feasts, they are still set up by house tables." Madison added.

"When will we know our class schedules?" Mirta asked.

"They will be passed around by the head boy and girl during the feast." Hannah said.

"At least today is Saturday, that gives us all of tomorrow to get acquainted with the school." Kari pointed out.

"And go exploring." Cindy added excitedly.

"Oh, I don't think we're allowed to go exploring." Mirta said nervously.

"But we will anyway." Kari said slyly.

"Yes we will." Cindy agreed.

"Anything from the trolley dears?" An older woman said, as she passed by the compartment.

"Girls, my treat," Cindy said, starting to feel more confident.

"In that case, I'm starving." Kari said, jumping from her seat.

Before long, the five girls had put away ten galleons in chocolate, sandwiches and candy. The room was littered with empty wrappers and boxes.

"What a mess." Hannah said, waving her wand at the floor, and making all the trash disappear.

"Wow, you're good." Kari said.

"I've tried to learn as much as I can, most of the smaller spells work just fine for me." Hannah answered proudly.

"Show off." Madison said under her breath.

"You're just jealous because none of the spells you've tried have worked." Hannah retorted.

"Well daaaaa." Madison said sarcastically.

The cars arrived at the Three Broomsticks only half of an hour after they departed King's Cross station. Harry and Ginny were the first to exit the cars, followed by the twins, and then Arthur and Molly. None of them were expecting the reception that was waiting for them.

Standing just outside the Three Broomsticks were the remaining Weasley's and their spouses.

"We just wanted to provide some moral support." Peggy Weasley-Snape said as she approached her mother.

"Oh my, you shouldn't have done this." Molly said, tears forming in her eyes.

"We just wanted you to know we were all behind you." Ron said, walking up and kissing his mother.

"And wait 'til we go inside." Fred added.

The Weasley's decorated Ginny's pub completely. Both magical and muggle decorations hung from the walls and ceiling of the main room, a banner that read 'Congratulations Mum' hung behind the bar.

Rosemerta; the barmaid, began pouring drinks for all the partygoers the moment they entered.

“Whose idea was this?” Molly asked smiling.

“Mine.” Ginny said.

“Ginny dear, you shouldn’t have.” Molly said, hugging her daughter tightly.

“You deserve it mum, you’ve spent almost your entire life caring for your children, and now you finally get to do what you love; teach. I thought what better way to say we love you than to throw a little party right before your first day.” Ginny said through tears of happiness.

“Thank you all, I have always thought I raised you right, now I’m sure.” She said, crying freely now.

“Let’s get this party started!” Fred bellowed as the music began to play in the pub.

“Hello there.” The girls all looked towards the compartment door. “I’m Conan Conner, your head boy; I just wanted to introduce myself.” The young man said, with a hint of superiority.

The girls just giggled.

“I’m just making sure all you first years understand who’s in charge.” The girls giggled again. “And that you have to do as you’re told.” The giggling turned into laughter. “I’m in charge, and you have to listen to me!” The young man began to get angry as the laughter increased, even Mirta was laughing defiantly.

“Oh shut up Conan, you couldn’t get a puppy to follow you.” A very attractive young lady said, as she pushed him passed the doorway. “I’m Celeste, the head girl, don’t listen to him, he’s obnoxious.” The young woman said.

“Don’t worry, we won’t listen to him.” Kari said amongst fits of laughter.

"Enjoy the ride." Celeste said, catching their giggles.

"Wasn't he the most obnoxious boy you've ever seen?" Kari asked the group.

"Without a doubt," Madison said, still laughing.

"I concur." Hannah agreed.

"Look, even Mirta found him funny." Cindy added, trying to compose herself.

The remainder of the trip to Hogwarts was filled with Conan bashing and meaningless girl talk. The trip seemed to go like lightning, before they knew it; they were pulling into Hogsmeade station.

The party was winding down; even Severus seemed to be having a joyous time. Arthur took his children, one by one, and personally thanked them for taking time from their busy schedules to ensure their mother would be happy.

"Harry," Arthur began, "why do I get the impression you had something to do with this?" Arthur asked.

"I don't know what you're talking about." Harry lied convincingly.

"Ok, have it your way, but I'll bet all that I have that you are the one actually behind this party." Arthur added as he walked away.

"Hermione, Charlie, Severus, Peggy, could you all come over here a moment?" Arthur called to them. "I just wanted to ask a small favor from you, if Molly's not up to par, or if she's doing something she shouldn't, please call me and let me know. I know none of you would confront her directly, but if she can't cut it as a teacher, I'll get her out. I'll just tell her I can't make it without her, and she'll leave happily." Arthur said seriously.

"Don't worry dad, mum will be perfect." Charlie said.

"Just promise me." Arthur pressed.

"We promise." They said in unison.

"Good, now where is my wife?" Arthur said loudly as he left the group.

"No, you'll call me." Harry said, obviously overhearing the conversation.

"Why?" Severus asked.

"Because I will make sure she succeeds no matter what. Teaching has been her dream since she started having children, and none of you will ruin it for her by allowing Arthur to take her home. Am I clear?" Harry asked, in a tone none of them had heard since the days of Voldemort.

"Clear." They responded in unison.

"It's time to go; the students will be arriving in less than an hour." Molly announced to the pub.

"Have a great year Molly, we'll all miss you." Harry said, hugging his mother in law tightly.

The professors made their way to the carriages that were waiting for them in front of the Three Broomsticks. Harry, Ginny and the twins apparated back to Lee Castle and the rest went back to their daily lives. The new school year was about to start.

"Firs' years, firs' years dis way!" A booming voice was heard over the din of all the students disembarking from the train.

"Oh wow, a giant." Kari said to the group.

"Not a giant, just Hagrid." Cindy clarified. "Hi Hagrid," Cindy called out to him.

"Hi ya Cindy, all right there?" Hagrid asked.

"All right, you?" Cindy asked back.

"All right." Hagrid answered.

"Doesn't he scare you?" Hannah asked Cindy.

"Scare me? Are you kidding, he's the nicest person I've ever met." Cindy answered.

Hagrid had apparently overheard the conversation because the rest of the trip to the boats, Hagrid was beaming.

The group of first years, with Hagrid in the lead set off on four-man boats towards Hogwarts.

"Oh look, there's the castle!" Madison called out to the crowd of first years as the castle came into view from the lead boat.

"Wow, it's so beautiful." Kari said astounded.

"It's even better on the inside." Cindy informed her.

The boats pulled into the docks next to Hogwarts, the first years made their way into the entrance hall, following Hagrid.

"Wait here." He told them, as he went ahead into the Great Hall.

A moment later, a tall wizard dressed all in black exited the Great Hall.

"Welcome to Hogwarts, I am Professor Snape, Deputy Headmaster and head of Slytherin house; in a moment we will be entering the Great Hall for the sorting. For all of you lucky enough to be sorted into Slytherin, I give you my congratulations, for all the rest, too bad." Snape said in his most evil tone.

"Now HE scares me." Kari whispered to Hannah.

Cindy had to fight the desire to laugh. Here was her Uncle Severus pretending to be some evil Slytherin, when he was just a big pussycat.

"Now," Snape said, as he pushed open the double doors leading to the Great Hall.

As the first years began to enter, they could see thousands of free-floating candles just above their heads. Above that, the ceiling was

magically enchanted to reflect the current sky. The ceiling was perfectly clear, with millions of stars all around.

Cindy followed the crowd as they made their way to the front of the staff table where an old, worn out wizard's hat had been reverently placed on a three-legged stool.

The crowd waited with baited breath for the hat to begin its song, they were not disappointed.

A crease formed just above the brim, and a nose and eyes seemed to take shape, as the hat repositioned itself, and as if out of the blue, it began to sing;

IN YEARS BEFORE  
THE BATTLE GREAT  
FOUGHT ON THE GROUNDS WITHIN

BETWEEN THE HEIR  
OF GRYFFINDOR  
AND HEIR OF SLYTHERIN

THE POTTER HOUSE  
THE RIDDLE HOUSE  
FOUGHT TO THE DEATH OF ONE

THE EVIL LIES  
THE GOOD PREVAILS  
AND NOW THE DEED IS DONE

I SING OF DEEDS SO FAIR PEACE  
I SING OF DEEDS SO FAIR LOVE  
I SING OF DEEDS SO FAIR

I SING OF EVIL NARE JOY  
I SING OF EVIL NARE BLISS  
I SING OF EVIL NARE

I SING OF HOUSES LESS  
THE HOUSES WERE  
I USED TO SING OF FOUR

AND NOW I SING  
OF SIX HOUSES  
WITHIN THE CASTLE MOOR

THERE'S GRYFFINDOR  
AND SLYTHERIN  
THE FIRST TWO THAT I SAY

AND RAVENCLAW  
AND HUFFLEPUFF  
BUT MORE THAN THAT TODAY

NOW ROMANOFF  
AND DUBOIS HOUSE  
HAVE JOINED THE HOGWARTS SCHOOL

SO WE CAN NOW  
COMBINE THE LOT  
IN UNITY WE RULE

MY SONG IS DONE  
MY TIME IS SPENT  
BACK TO THE SHELF I FALL

REMEMBER ALL  
TOGETHER LOVE  
WILL UNIFY US ALL

The students erupted with cheers and applause. The first years just looked around, not really sure if they should be joining in the celebration.

“Abignale, Sara.” Snape’s cold voice rang out.

Sara Abignale made her way tentatively to the stool, and placed the sorting hat upon her head.

“Ravenclaw!” The hat yelled out.

“Bynes, Anita.” Snape called.

The young girl did not seem to have the same fears as Sara; she walked purposefully to the stool and placed the hat on her head.

“Slytherin.” The hat declared.

Cindy lost interest in the sorting; she began looking around the staff table, and noticed how many of the teachers she knew personally. She stared at the staff as they watched the sorting intently.

Cindy was pulled out from her daze when she heard the name; “Jersey, Kari.” Cindy watched as Kari, who was so sure of herself, walked up to the hat, and did as the others had, placed it on her head.

“Romanoff.” The hat exclaimed.

“She expected it.” Cindy thought to herself.

The sorting continued as Cindy continued to look around the Great Hall, and then she heard “Mirta.” She snapped to attention as Mirta, seeming so small compared to the humans, made her way to the hat.

“Dubois.” The hat said softly, not wanting to hurt Mirta’s ears.

“I’ll be soon; Potter is just three letters away.” She thought to herself, but nothing prepared her for the name that erupted from Snape’s mouth.

“Potter, Cindy.” He called, staring right at her.

Cindy walked right up to the stool, and placed the hat on her head.

“Ah, another Potter, but stronger, yes, smarter, possibly, I’ll put you in... Gryffindor!” The hat practically screamed.

“Oh thank goodness, a Gryffindor.” Cindy said to herself as she made her way to the Gryffindor table.

Cindy paid little attention to the sorting, she didn’t even hear when Hannah was made a Ravenclaw and Madison was made a Gryffindor.

“Hey, we’re both Gryffindors.” Madison said, as she sat next to Cindy.

"This is great; we're in Gryffindor, just like my mom and dad." Cindy said excitedly.

When the Headmistress stood, the room quieted immediately.

"Just a few quick words; let the feast begin." McGonagall said, and then sat back down.

Instantly the feast appeared before the students, mounds of fried chicken, and mashed potatoes and deserts of every kind magically appeared before the students.

Cindy, along with the entire student body, wasted no time in attacking the food. She ate like she hadn't ever eaten before; she gorged on the prime rib, the fried chicken, and the steaks. By the time the feast was over, Cindy could hardly move.

"Oh, I think I ate too much." Madison told Cindy.

"You, I think I need new clothes." Cindy said laughing.

"Your schedules," they heard Conan's voice behind them.

They could not control themselves they began laughing uncontrollably. Seeing the spectacle, the rest of the Gryffindor table joined in. Conan stormed out of the Great Hall.

"What do you got?" Madison asked as she peeked over Cindy's shoulder. "Hey, we got the same classes, cool." She added.

"Really, I hope the other girls do too." Cindy hoped.

"Who are Mike Martin, and Jacqueline Monet and this Gregoriev, I've never heard of them." Cindy said.

"And who is Peggy Weasley? Is she related to you?" Madison asked.

"Yeah, she's my Aunt, but I thought first years didn't get Divination?" Cindy answered.

"They added the course this year, Hannah told me." Madison said.

"That's a lot of courses." Cindy observed.

"Oh, and we have your Aunt Hermione for Transfiguration, and your Uncle Charlie for Potions. Oh, and that Hagrid giant for Care of Magical Creatures," Hannah declared, but Cindy just wasn't listening. "Are you listening to me?" She asked indignantly.

"Oh, sorry, I was just thinking of all those classes, we won't have time for anything but school and study." Cindy said sadly.

"What did you expect, this IS school." Madison said in an obvious tone.

"I thought we'd have more time to have fun, that's all." Cindy said, staring at her empty plate.

McGonagall stood again. "A few start of term notices; Mr. Filch, our caretaker, would like all students to consult the list of banned items before bringing anything into the school. The forest remains forbidden to all students, no exploring allowed. Quidditch tryouts will begin next month, please make every effort to join your house teams. And finally, this year we are starting a new Hogwarts tradition, the Valentine's Day dance. On the fourteenth of February, a dance will be held for the entire student body, I hope you all will participate. New prefects, please escort the first years to their respective dormitories, and have a great year.

The first year students made their way to the respective dormitories, Cindy, who had explored the castle many times, knew exactly where it was.

"Miss Potter, welcome back." The portrait of the fat lady said to Cindy.

"Thank you, it's good to be back." Cindy said smiling, oblivious to the stares she was getting from her fellow Gryffindors.

"The Leaky Cauldron." The fifth year girl's prefect said to the fat lady.

When Cindy entered the Gryffindor common room, she almost felt like she was home. The prefect took the first year girls to their

dormitories and Cindy went straight up to her bed. She was lucky enough to have been placed by the window like she had hoped.

None of the first year girls wasted any time, they all went straight to sleep.

The morning of Sunday September 2 found Cindy sitting in the common room of Gryffindor house. She had spent the better part of the night unable to sleep; this was the first time she had been away from her family since she was adopted many years before.

She sat stroking Hedwig's soft plumage as she stared into the cozy fire. Out of the corner of her eye she saw Madison walking down the stairs.

"You're up early." Madison said as she sat next to Cindy.

"Up most of the night, I'm not used to sleeping without my family nearby." Cindy said honestly.

"But your family is nearby. In fact, you have more family here than anybody in Hogwarts history." Madison argued.

"Yeah, I never really thought about it like that, you're right. Hey, what do you say to a little exploring? Nothing forbidden, just to get acquainted with the school," Cindy recommended.

"Yeah, why not, I'll get dressed." Madison agreed, running back up the stairs.

"Hey, can we come along?" A boy with blonde hair asked.

"And you are?" Cindy asked.

"David Zane, everybody calls me Dave, this is Frank Wills, and we're first years also." Dave said.

"I don't mind, but I'll have to ask my friends." Cindy answered.

"Friends?" Frank asked.

"Yeah, Madison you just saw, and there's her cousin Hannah, and our friends Kari and Mirta." Cindy explained.

"Mirta? The elf?" Frank asked with a tone Cindy didn't like.

"Yes the elf, why, is there a problem?" Cindy asked indignantly.

"Not with me, she's the first elf I've ever seen, I'm muggle born." Dave said.

"Well I have a problem with it, servants should NOT be educated." Frank said angrily.

Cindy practically leapt from her chair and stood nose to nose with Frank. "Then if you have a problem, maybe you shouldn't come with us." Cindy said in a warning tone.

"I won't, come on Dave." Frank said, turning to go.

"You go I want to go exploring." Dave said defiantly.

"What, you're going to hang out with a house elf?" Frank asked angrily.

"Well, better a house elf than a house idiot." Dave said, getting just as angry.

"Fine," Frank said, leaving through the portrait of the fat lady.

"I'm sorry; I didn't know Frank was a bigot." Dave apologized.

"It's ok, I have a feeling he won't be the last. Oh, by the way, I'm Cindy." Cindy said, shaking Dave's hand.

"Yeah, I know. Are you related to Harry Potter, the Baron of Lee?" Dave asked curiously.

"He's my father, is that related enough?" Ginny asked smiling.

"Wow, you live in Lee Castle?" Dave asked in awe.

"Yeah, but I like our other castle, it's much bigger." Cindy explained in a longing voice.

"Bigger than Lee Castle, it must be huge." Dave said.

"Yeah, it's a magical castle, on an island in Australia, so we can spend the day at the beach, and the nights on our boat." Cindy said reminiscingly.

"That's so cool." Dave said impressed.

"Ready." Madison said, walking down the stairs.

"Oh Maddy, this is Dave, Dave Zane, you mind if he comes with us?" Cindy asked politely.

"Of course not, hello Dave, I'm Madison Roseworth." She introduced herself.

"Pleased to meet you, you don't really mind, do you?" Dave asked, just in case.

"No, certainly not, the more the merrier," Madison added in her most friendly manner.

"Than let's go." Cindy announced, and they followed her out of the portrait.

They made their way down to the Great Hall, where seven tables were strategically placed throughout the Hall. The younger grades were closer to the staff table, and the elder grades were closer to the door.

Cindy scanned the table for her friends, but didn't see them, so the three sat facing the doors with their backs to the staff table.

"Do you think the girls are up yet?" Cindy asked Madison.

"Probably not, Hannah always sleeps late on Sundays." Madison said, helping herself to some bacon.

"Have you made many friends yet?" Cindy engaged Dave in conversation.

"Frank was the only one, but now I don't think we'll stay friends." Dave answered.

"Madison and I were friends since the World Cup, so I haven't had a chance to speak to anyone else." Cindy explained.

"You got to go to the World Cup?" Dave asked impressed again.

Cindy started to realize that maybe her life had been a fairy tale life. "Um, actually, my Uncle Ron owns the Chudley Cannons." Cindy said, almost sounding embarrassed.

"Oh wow, you're so lucky." Dave continued.

"Then I won't tell you how he got the team." Cindy said, to herself.

"How did he get the team?" Madison asked, obviously overhearing.

Cindy stared at her friend for just a moment. "My father gave him the team, as a wedding gift." Cindy answered.

"Wow, that's some gift." Madison said impressed.

Cindy looked towards Dave who was sitting there with his mouth open in complete surprise.

"You must be so rich. My family had to get money from a foundation to pay for me to come to school." Dave said sadly.

"I understand; my dad talks about how poor he was when he came to Hogwarts." Cindy attempted to console him.

"Your dad was poor?" Madison asked.

"Oh yeah, he was forced to wear his cousin's hand-me-downs, which were several sizes too big." Cindy explained.

"And now he gives away professional Quidditch teams." Dave added.

"Hey girls," Kari said, sitting down next to Madison.

"Hey Kari, this is Dave, mind if he comes along on an exploration trip?" Cindy asked.

"Course not, hi Dave, I'm Kari Jersey." She said, thrusting out her hand.

"Pleased to meet you," Dave said politely.

"Have you seen the others?" Madison asked, referring to her cousin and Mirta.

"Nope, but if they're not here by the time I gorge myself, they're out of luck." Kari said, stuffing a scone into her mouth.

"Well, than I guess we're not out of luck." Hannah said as she and Mirta sat down at the table.

"Girls, this is Dave, Dave this is Maddy's cousin Hannah, and this is Mirta." Cindy introduced them.

"Pleasure," Hannah said simply.

"Hi." Mirta said shyly.

"Mind if he joins our little exploration trip?" Cindy asked.

"What exploration trip, you're not trying to get us in trouble on our first day, are you?" Hannah asked nervously.

"No, nothing illegal, just to get acquainted with the school," Cindy clarified.

"Yeah, ok, we can all go." Hannah said, from behind a book.

After breakfast, the five girls, and their new friend; Dave, made their way out of the Great Hall. Just as they were leaving, another group was entering, a Slytherin group.

The group, which consisted of Anita Bynes, Rachel Feld, Roberta Martin, Bill Loss and John Kirby, entered the Great Hall like they owned it.

"If it isn't the servant," Bill Loss said.

"Why don't you shut up, Slytherin?" Dave said angrily.

"Aw, is the little Gryffindor going to do something?" John asked condescendingly.

"No, we all will." Cindy said, stepping in front of Mirta.

"And what are you supposed to be?" Anita asked in an amused tone.

"Your worst nightmare, don't you remember the World Cup?" Kari asked, now jumping into the thick of things.

"Is there a problem here?" The Headmistress asked as she walked by.

"Nothing at all Professor, we were just having a slight disagreement." Anita said coldly.

"Yes ma'am, we think the Slytherins are completely useless, and they think they're only partly useless." Kari piped in.

"Miss Jersey, you don't want to spend your first week of school in detention, do you?" McGonagall asked angrily.

"No ma'am." Kari answered.

"Then I recommend you show your fellow students some respect, and continue along." McGonagall warned.

"Yes ma'am." Kari said as she and her friends left the Great Hall, the Slytherins just snickered.

"That burns me, it was their fault." Kari said, kicking the front doors open.

"Maybe, but you mouthed off to the Headmistress, what did you think would happen?" Madison said.

"You have to control yourself, or you'll spend everyday in detention." Hannah agreed.

"What do you think?" Kari asked Cindy.

"I should have hexed them." Cindy said angrily.

"See, Cindy's on my side." Kari said smiling.

"Yeah I am, but they're right also, don't snap at the Headmistress, that can only lead to trouble." Cindy said, regaining her composure.

"Ok, it's over, let's go exploring." Dave said, changing the subject.

"You want to check out Hagrid's cabin?" Cindy asked excitedly.

"Sounds like fun, but who's Hagrid?" Dave asked.

"You know that giant that led us across the lake?" Hannah asked smiling.

"That huge, hairy guy that looks like he could eat us?" Dave asked disbelievingly.

"That's the guy." Kari added.

As the group walked by the large gold and onyx statue on the front lawn of the castle, Cindy realized that she would soon be teased about a great many things.

"Harry Potter?" Dave asked.

"Yeah, this is where the Battle of Hogwarts was fought." Hannah said reverently.

"Your dad Cindy," Dave asked surprised.

"Yeah, I forgot you're muggle born, and probably hadn't heard about the battle." Cindy said, hoping he'd drop the subject.

"All those people died?" He asked Hannah.

"Yeah, it was the bloodiest battle ever fought in the wizarding world, and Cindy's dad led the fight." Hannah explained.

"Wait a minute, Cindy; you were alive when the battle took place." Dave said, reading the date on the statue.

"Yeah, I was." Cindy said shortly.

"Did you get to see any of it?" He pressed.

Cindy just got a sad look on her face and walked away.

"Cindy," Kari called and ran after her. "Are you all right?" She asked concernedly.

"I was there Kari; I watched many of those people die." Cindy confided in her.

"You were there, you saw the Battle of Hogwarts?" Kari asked amazed.

"Please don't tell anybody, but I participated as well." Cindy said, crying slightly.

"But you were so young." Kari added.

"I stopped Voldemort from killing my Uncle Albus." Cindy explained.

"Stopped, what do you mean stopped?" Kari pressed her for information.

"I'm not allowed to say, all I can say is I stopped Voldemort, and took Uncle Albus to safety, that's when my dad showed up to kill him." Cindy explained further.

"Wow, you must have been only six or seven." Kari said, sitting on a rock next to the lake.

The gigantic squid that lived in the lake extended one of its long tentacles and began to stroke Cindy's hair, Kari just stared in surprise.

"There's more, Voldemort sent his Death Eaters to our house right before the battle to kill my dad, I couldn't let them, I just couldn't." Cindy said crying.

Evidently Cindy had never got the horror of that night off her chest; she broke down right there and then, with just her best friend Kari and the giant squid to help her.

"You killed them? How many were there?" Kari asked, gaining a new respect for Cindy.

"Six, they came as my father was recovering from being poisoned. My grandmother was taking me to get some warm milk, and the six men just apparated outside the house and broke in. They stunned my grandmother, and were about to kill her then my dad, I had to stop them." Cindy began crying hysterically.

Cindy hadn't noticed, but the rest of her friends were gathering behind her.

"How did you kill them?" Kari asked.

"I'm not allowed to say, but they died quickly." Cindy said, still oblivious as to who was behind her.

"But then why isn't your name on the 'Wall of Honor'?" Kari asked.

"It is, it's just been magically erased until after I finish school." Cindy said, rubbing the squid's tentacle.

"Wow, you're tougher than you look Potter." Kari said, making Cindy laugh with her.

"Um, hello," Hannah said from behind her.

Cindy spun around to see all her friends with shocked looks on their faces. Cindy had no intention of telling anyone but Kari.

"Sorry Cindy, but we overheard." Dave said, sitting next to Cindy. "But we'll never say anything, right girls?" Dave added, turning to the others.

"We swear it, don't we girls?" Madison asked.

"We swear." Hannah and Mirta said together.

"Thanks guys." Cindy said smiling.

"And what is this?" A booming voice came from behind them.

## **Chapter 6 – Cindy’s First Day**

“Hi Hagrid,” Cindy said excitedly.

“Ello Cindy, what’re ya up to?” Hagrid asked.

“Oh nothing much, just showing my friends around. Here, let me introduce them.” Cindy said, jumping to her feet. “This is Kari, and over there we have Dave, Hannah, Madison and Mirta, guys, this is Hagrid; our Care of Magical Creatures teacher.” Cindy added.

“Ello all, stayin’ outa trouble?” Hagrid asked.

“Oh, yes sir.” Dave answered for the group.

“Ow about a cuppa?” Hagrid offered.

“No thanks Hagrid, we have a lot of exploring to do.” Cindy said, remembering her father’s warning about Hagrid’s cooking.

“All righ’ then, see ya all tomorrow.” Hagrid added turning to leave.

“Bye Hagrid.” The group said together.

Hagrid walked back to his small hut on the edge of the forest and vanished inside. Cindy’s spirits had been lifted somewhat by Hagrid’s brief visit, but she was still slightly down.

“How about some exploring?” Kari asked, seeing the look on her face.

“Yeah, that sounds like fun.” Cindy said, her spirits lifting even further.

The group walked around the entire school, Cindy would stop every so often to point out a fact or two about the Battle of Hogwarts, her friends listened intently.

“Hello Miss Cindy.” They all heard a small voice from the shadows of the east courtyard of the castle.

Cindy turned to find the last person she expected to see; Winky.

“Winky, what are you doing here?” Cindy asked excitedly.

"Master Harry wanted me to see to your personal needs." Winky explained.

"And to keep an eye on me," Cindy added knowingly.

"Oh no Miss, Winky would never betray your trust, and Master Harry knows this." Winky explained.

"Ok Winky let me introduce you to my friends; this is Dave, and Kari, and Hannah, and Madison and this is Mirta." Cindy said, making sure to point out the elf.

"You are the famous Winky?" Mirta asked reverently. "You fought along side of the great Harry Potter?" Mirta continued.

"Yes I am, now I watch over Master Harry's prize possession; Miss Cindy." Winky said proudly.

"You are so lucky." Mirta said quietly.

"Would Miss Cindy and her friends like a picnic lunch?" Winky asked.

Cindy looked around; the looks on her friend's faces told her they all wanted this picnic.

Sure, right here would be nice." Cindy answered, knowing the spot was away from prying eyes.

"Winky will be back in a moment." Winky said, and popped away.

"You're going to have your own house elf while you're here?" Kari asked.

"Looks that way," Cindy answered distractedly.

The group did not have to wait long for Winky to return, within minutes she was back with a large picnic basket and blanket for them to sit on.

"Thank you Winky." Cindy said as the elf disappeared from sight.

"Oh wow, chicken." Dave exclaimed as he began to dive into lunch.

"This is so cool," Kari said in between bites of her sandwich.

"Let's not get too used to this; I'm sure Winky would get tired of this too quickly." Hannah argued.

"Actually, Winky would be honored to do this every day." Mirta explained.

"Well, I wouldn't want her too, Winky's my friend, not my servant." Cindy declared.

When lunch was over, the group resolved to explore within the castle walls. Cindy led them to where they would be attending each of their classes though each classroom was locked; she also showed them the new 'all houses' common room. But the only places they really wanted to see were the DA common room and the DA training room; also known as the room of requirement.

"This is where the DA used to train." Cindy was explaining as they entered the room of requirement.

The group, Cindy included, froze when they saw what was inside. The room was filled with all sorts of medieval weapons, modern swords and books on muggle defensive tactics.

"It's different from when the DA used it." Cindy explained.

"That's because I'm going to be using it." A voice said from the corner of the room.

They all turned to see a young woman clad in black leather holding a sword in her right hand. As the woman got closer, they began to notice her coloring; she was extremely pale with black lipstick and eye liner.

"And you are?" Kari asked.

"I am RJ, I'll be teaching muggle defensive arts after regular classes this year, starting next week." The woman answered politely.

"Wait a minute, you're a vampire!" Dave exclaimed as he, Mirta and the cousins took several steps back.

"Yes I am, and I see you two are not afraid, you should be." The woman said coldly to Kari and Cindy.

"Why?" Cindy asked, conveying no emotion.

"Why? Because a Vampire could kill you, or worse, before you'd have time to react." The woman explained.

"They could try, yes, but why should we be afraid of you?" Cindy clarified.

"Interesting question, explain to me why you ask?" The woman asked, very interested in the answer.

"Well, if you were dangerous, the Headmistress would not allow you to enter, let alone teach here." Cindy answered calmly.

"You are a very intelligent young lady, what is your name?" The woman asked in a slightly amused tone.

"My name is Cindy." Cindy answered.

"Well Cindy, would you and your friends like a quick lesson?" The woman asked, eager to start teaching.

"I would." Cindy answered.

"So would I." Kari agreed.

"Me too," Dave piped in.

The other three just stood there quietly.

"Very well, Cindy, take this; it's a wooden sword used for practicing. We'll run through some basic fighting and blocking techniques. Are you ready?" RJ asked.

Cindy held the sword out in front of her, and bowed in the traditional sword fighting manor.

"Ah, you've had training." RJ stated.

"Yes ma'am, quite a bit." Cindy said modestly.

"Then let's have some fun." RJ said before bringing her wooden sword down on Cindy.

Cindy blocked the slow moving blow easily, and pushed RJ's sword away from her just as easily.

"Good, let's start moving a little faster." RJ added as she swung her sword three times at Cindy who easily blocked all three shots.

"Cool," Dave said to Kari.

"Shall we go to the next level?" RJ asked smiling.

"Yes ma'am, please." Cindy said, trying desperately not to sound cocky and failing miserably.

"All out?" RJ asked.

"Yes please." Cindy said smiling.

"Do you think you can last against me fighting all out?" RJ continued.

"I don't know ma'am. And I won't know until we try." Cindy explained calmly.

"A very astute answer, all right, all out it is, let me know when you're ready." RJ said, gaining new respect for this little girl in front of her.

"Now." No sooner had the word come out of her mouth that RJ attacked with all the veracity of a vampire.

RJ kept swinging her sword, and Cindy kept blocking it. Cindy was using all the knowledge and skills she had learned from her father, the man she considered to be the best swordsman on the planet. RJ began to use another tactic; she started to jump about as she swung her sword, trying desperately to connect, or at least to come close to connecting. It was no use; Cindy managed to block all her shots, but

Cindy was still young, she was growing weaker by the second, Cindy needed this to end soon.

Cindy decided to put RJ on the defensive, as soon as there was an opening, Cindy attacked for the first time, this took RJ by surprise, but the surprise only lasted a moment, RJ was even better at defense than offense, she blocked all of Cindy's blows without even the slightest trouble. Then, just as quickly as it started, it stopped.

"Enough." RJ said, not sounding the least bit winded. "That was the most incredible piece of fighting I have seen in many years, you are a credit to your teacher." RJ complimented her.

"Thank you princess, you honor me with your kind words." Cindy said bowing.

"What did you call me?" RJ asked surprised.

"Princess of course, you are the Princess Rebecca Jane Veganos, are you not?" Cindy asked.

"How do you know that name?" RJ asked nervously.

"I am Cindy Potter, my father is Harry Potter." Cindy explained.

RJ began to laugh. "I should have known, only Potter's child could have given me a run for my money, you are an excellent swordsman." RJ said bowing.

"That was fantastic, I've never seen such fighting, not even on the tele." Dave said amazed.

"Can we learn that?" Kari asked excitedly.

"You could yes, but it would take many years of learning. How long have you been studying?" RJ asked, turning towards Cindy.

"Six years," Cindy said without hesitation.

"See, six years to get to where she is. If you all want to be as good as her, you'll have to be as dedicated." RJ explained.

"It is opened to first years, isn't it?" Madison asked, speaking for the first time.

"It wasn't going to be, but I think it will be starting tomorrow." RJ said in an impressed voice.

"Um RJ, may I ask a favor?" Cindy asked.

"Certainly Cindy," RJ responded.

"Could you not speak of what we did here today, my dad would get upset?" Cindy asked sheepishly.

"Certainly Cindy, I won't tell a soul." RJ said smiling.

"Thank you." Cindy said quietly.

"Well, I think the lesson is over, now if you'll excuse me, I still have preparations to make." RJ told the group.

"Thanks for everything." Cindy said for the group.

"You're welcome." RJ added as she turned back to her work.

Cindy finished off the tour by taking them to the old DA common room. The room, which hadn't been used in several years, was kept in fairly good shape. Dust had only accumulated in the hardest reachable locations, but the visible areas were quite clean.

"So this is where it all happened." Hannah said almost reverently.

"The entire war was planned in this very room." Madison added.

"Elves sat with wizards as equals." Mirta spoke up for the first time in several hours.

"I used to play right over there." Cindy said, pointing to the corner she favored as a young girl.

"You were here?" Dave asked.

"Yeah, my mom and dad used to bring me here while they were planning everything." Cindy explained.

"Are you adopted?" Madison asked, realizing Cindy's and Harry's ages.

"Yeah," Cindy said matter-of-factly.

"I never realized, but I guess I should have, you're too old to be Harry's natural born daughter." Hannah added.

"I was adopted just after I turned five." Cindy continued.

"But you look just like him, and your mother." Kari observed.

"Yeah, everybody says so, weird huh." Cindy said.

"What do you say to going to the new common room?" Dave asked, trying to redirect everyone's attention.

"I'm game." Kari answered.

"Let's go." Cindy agreed.

The group went to the new common room. The oversized room contained many large sofas, overstuffed chairs, work stations, even a huge round pillow with a 10 meter diameter in the center of the room used for lounging.

The group went straight to a corner with a small window, two sofas and a chair. They all sat down and began recapping the day's events.

The rest of the day passed uneventfully for the group. They talked, ate, and eventually went to bed. Cindy and Hannah went up to the first year Gryffindor girl's dorm and Dave to the first year boy's. Sleep came quick and decisively for the six friends, before long, their first day would be upon them.

On the morning of Monday September 3rd, the group met in the Great Hall for breakfast and to compare schedules. Cindy, Madison

and David were the first to arrive, but the rest showed up shortly thereafter.

"Ok, who's got Transfiguration with Granger first period?" Cindy asked the group.

"I do," Madison said.

"So do I," Dave piped in.

"Me too," Kari added.

"How about Charms with Gregoriev, second period?" Cindy continued.

"Madison and I do." Hannah said.

"Me too," Dave said.

"Ditto," Kari agreed.

By the time breakfast was over, Cindy knew she had the following: Monet for History with Hannah, Madison and Mirta, Charlie Weasley for Potions with Madison, Dave and Kari, Krum for DADA with everyone of her friends, Peggy Weasley for Divination with Madison and Dave, Martin for Astronomy with Madison and Kari, and finally Hagrid for Care of Magical Creatures with all of them.

The first bell rang all too soon for the group, they gathered up their belongings and followed the crowd out of the Great Hall. Cindy, Madison, Dave and Kari headed for Transfiguration, while the rest broke up in two other directions.

Upon entering Professor McGonagall's old classroom, it was plain to Cindy that it had been enlarged to accommodate all the new students in Hogwarts. The room had been magically enlarged and there was now seating for fifty students. It was also evident to Cindy that her Aunt Hermione had been very busy making the classroom her own; many more bookcases had been added, as well as group tables and brighter lighting. Most of the cages that used to line the classroom had been removed, as well as all windows and portraits.

"It's different than I remember." Cindy told Kari.

"Let's sit towards the back; I don't want to be too close to the teacher." Kari declared.

"Ok, is right here good?" Cindy asked, motioning to four available seats one row from the back.

"Yeah, that's fine." Kari agreed.

The moment the second bell rang, Professor Granger entered the classroom carrying what looked like the largest book any of the students had ever seen.

"Good morning class, I'm Professor Granger, I presume this is my first year class." Hermione asked.

"Yes Professor Granger." The class responded.

"Excellent. This year we will be focusing on simple transfigurations, mostly inanimate objects, but towards the end of the year, we'll begin transforming small creatures." Hermione began, sitting at her desk.

"Before we begin, I would like to take a moment to explain the complexities of transfiguration; we as witches and wizards always look upon transfiguration as simply turning one object into another, but I'm here to tell you there's more to it, much more. The most advanced form of transfiguration would be self-transformation, and though the wizarding community has only just begun to scratch the surface of this advanced form of transfiguration, namely the animagus transformation, there is much more to this than previously thought."

I have been working with my good friend and teacher; Harry Potter, in more interesting ways to transfigure one's self, over the next seven years, a select few of you will learn this incredibly useful skill.

This huge book I have in front of me was procured during a raid of the Los Diablo's European headquarters in Madrid, Spain approximately four years ago. In it, it describes the many skills needed to perform

the more complex forms of self-transfiguration, and how to achieve them.

“So, by tonight, I expect to be training a handful of first years in this most valuable trait. Are there any questions?” Professor Granger asked.

Madison immediately raised her hand.

“Yes?” The Professor asked.

“Are you saying we could turn into inanimate objects and back again? And, has anyone succeeded in doing it yet?” Hannah asked.

Hermione smiled at the question, it was a typical Hermione question.

“Yes and yes.” Hermione answered vaguely.

Instantly Madison’s hand shot right back up again.

“Yes Miss Roseworth?” Hermione asked pleasantly.

“Who and what have they turned into?” Hannah pressed.

“Well, I for one have succeeded, and I can turn into just about anything.” Hermione answered.

“Can you show us?” Madison asked without raising her hand.

“Yes, but not today. I have to first ask for volunteers for this new form of transfiguration, which is called; Hyper-transfiguration, and now requires a license and to be registered just to train.” Hermione said, as she watched the entire class raise their hands. “Goodness, this is more than I expected, perhaps I wasn’t clear, there are many dangers to this training, you will have to come by after school and on weekends, and, it will take you seven years to complete, so let me ask again, do I have any volunteers?” Hermione asked again, with the same results, the entire class raised their hands. “Well, it seems that we can then use part of the regular transfiguration class to teach the Hyper-transfiguration, but we will still need to meet after school and on weekends, any problems?” Hermione pressed, but no one

spoke. "Then I will speak to the Headmistress about placing you all in the Hyper-transfiguration class, but until she gives her approval, let's begin the regular lesson. Please take out your books and turn to page three." Hermione added.

The class did as they were told, but no matter how hard Hermione tried, she couldn't get the class to stop whispering about the hyper-transfiguration training.

"Next time I'll wait until the end of class to make the announcement." Hermione said to herself as the class kept chattering.

The remainder of the forty-five minute class passed relatively quick, Hermione kept trying to go over the first five pages of the text book, and the class kept trying to get her to talk about hyper-transfiguration. When the bell rang to go to the next class, everyone was still excited about the prospect of this new skill they would be learning, and went merrily onto their next class.

Cindy, Madison, Dave and Kari all walked to their next class; Charms, where they would be meeting up with Hannah. No one knew what to expect from this new teacher; Alekzandr Gregoriev, but they were still too excited to care.

When they had all taken their seats, again Kari requested the back of the room; their new teacher exited his office, and stepped in front of the class. No one expected him to be so young; he was a man in his mid twenties, cleanly shaven with short brown hair and sparkling blue eyes. He smiled warmly at the class, and began without any prerequisites.

"Good morning, I am your Charms teacher, Professor Gregoriev." The Professor began, in an unusually American accent for a Russian born wizard. "I gather by the shocked looks on your faces you were not expecting an American accent, but my family immigrated to the United States when I was just an infant, so all my learning has been in the west. I came over specifically to teach here at Hogwarts with my old friend and colleague; Michael Martin, who teaches Astronomy." The Professor began to walk around the classroom. "I want to get a good look at all of you, even those hiding in the back row." He said, staring right at Kari. He waved his wand at the class,

and nameplates appeared in front of every student. “Are you satisfied with your seat Miss Jersey?” Professor Gregoriev asked politely.

“Um, yes sir.” Kari answered sheepishly.

“Excellent. “Ah, Miss Potter, I’ve heard a great many things about you, I hope you can live up to your reputation.” He added as he passed Cindy. “Miss Webster, I hear you’re the shining star of Ravenclaw, let’s see how you perform in my class.” He said, just before he walked back to the front of the class.

“Put all books and parchments away, I like to teach ‘hands-on’, so pull out your wands, and let’s begin.” He said, sitting down on his desk.

The class loved the Professor’s ‘hands-on’ approach to teaching, the class flew by, and before any of them realized, the class was over. They had spent most of their time trying to get a feather to rise off their desk. Cindy, for the sake of appearances, failed the first couple of times, then succeeded, gaining Gryffindor ten house points.

“Now that class I loved.” Dave said, passing Cindy by as he rushed to his next class.

“Me too,” she called out to him as he ran off.

“Well, I’m off to Divination; I’ll see you all later.” Kari said, heading for Trelawney’s tower.

“Have fun,” Madison said giggling, having all ready heard of Professor Trelawney’s reputation.

“And we’re off to History.” Hannah reminded the other two, as they made their way to Professor Monet’s class.

Unlike their other two teachers, Professor Monet stood in front of her classroom door introducing herself personally to each and every student. She was an extremely young woman, not older than eighteen, with black hair down to her waist, and brown eyes. She was quite tall, with a pleasant disposition.

"Hello, I am Professor Monet." She said to Cindy.

"Hi, I'm Cindy, Cindy Potter." Cindy replied.

"Are you really, your family did quite a lot for me and my fellow Beaubaton students a few years back, welcome to my class." The Professor said graciously.

"Thank you." Cindy said in French.

"And you speak French," the Professor responded in French.

"Yes, quite fluently," Cindy said, returning to English.

The Professor followed the last student to enter, than headed straight to the front of the class.

"Good morning class, welcome to History of Magic, I would like to take a moment to tell you about myself." Professor Monet said in perfect English despite her heavily accented voice. "This is my first year teaching, it is in fact, my first year out of Hogwarts. I came to this school after my old school; Beaubatons, was destroyed by Death Eaters during the reign of Voldemort, which you will learn about this year. My family was killed in the attack, and I was left with no money or home, luckily a foundation was created to help people like me, and I was able to attend school here, and now I want to give back, and repay the generosity I was shown by teaching at Hogwarts." The Professor explained, openly and honestly.

"Was it the Lily Foundation?" Hannah asked.

"Yes, very good, ten points to Ravenclaw. It was the Lily Foundation, but up to last summer, I didn't know who Lily was, do you?" Professor Monet asked Hannah.

"Who, I thought it was named after the flower." Hannah replied.

"Ah, so did I, but no, does anyone know who Lily was?" She asked the class, but looked straight at Cindy. "Cindy, do you know?" She asked Cindy specifically.

All eyes turned to Cindy, who began to blush. "Yes." She answered shyly.

"Don't be shy, tell everyone who Lily was." Professor Monet pressed.

"She was my grandmother; she died when my father was just a baby, she died to save my father." Cindy answered shyly.

"Ten points to Gryffindor. She was Lily Potter, mother of the famous Harry Potter; Mr. Potter established the foundation so that any orphan could have the same opportunities as anyone else. I have been fortunate enough to have been cared for by this foundation for five years, and when I asked them what I could do to repay them, they said teach, so now I do." She explained to the class.

"But the Lily Foundation now pays for all underprivileged children, not just orphans." Hannah piped in.

"Absolutely correct, another five points to Ravenclaw. They now fund all underprivileged children, as a matter of fact; sixteen first years have the opportunity to attend Hogwarts because of this Foundation." She added.

"Including me," Hannah whispered to Cindy, but not loud enough for Madison to hear.

If it were possible, Cindy turned even redder.

"But enough about me, this year we will be focusing on important events of the last hundred years, and unlike my colleague, Professor Binns, I do not feel the goblin rebellions are the pivotal points in history. Between September and October we will be discussing Grindelwald and his reign of power, followed in November and December by Albus Dumbledore and how he defeated him. After the Christmas holiday, we will move onto Voldemort and his reign, followed in the spring by Harry Potter, and his Dark Aurors." Monet explained.

"Professor, there were no books for History of Magic on our book list." Hannah said, raising her hand.

"Yes, I know, the book I wanted to use hadn't been published yet at the time the book lists were sent out, but a good friend of mine; Gabrielle Delacour arranged to get the books here for you at no cost to your parents." The Professor said, reaching behind her desk, and magically lifting a box onto her desk. "'The Last Hundred Years' by Colin Creevey. Mr. Creevey spent several years researching Grindelwald and Dumbledore, and more importantly, fought at the Battle of Hogwarts. This is the most accurate history book ever published." She announced, magically distributing the book. "Now, I want you all to turn to page one, and we'll begin." She ordered.

When the bell rang, Cindy went off by herself to meet with Dave and Kari in the Potions classroom. Cindy was already feeling tired, she had not been to an organized school in many years, and was really starting to look forward to lunch at that point.

Charlie, unlike the rest of her teachers, spent no time on small talk, and went right into the lesson about wolfsbane. He was a no nonsense instructor, the students were there to learn, and he was not going to disappoint them.

When the lunch bell rang at noon, Cindy, Kari and Dave made their way to the Great Hall. They took the seats they had used for breakfast, and sat down to a relaxing meal.

"Did you girls have Transfiguration?" Madison asked Hannah and Mirta.

"Yeah," they both agreed.

"Are you going for the Hyper-transfiguration lessons?" She pressed.

"I can't, elves can't transfigure themselves." Mirta explained.

"I'm a little nervous about it, but I did volunteer. I was the only one who volunteered." Hannah explained.

"Really, our whole class volunteered." Kari said, while stuffing a ham sandwich into her mouth.

"My class is made up of Hufflepuffs and Slytherins, they either did not want to stay after school or were too afraid to try." Hannah explained.

"Too bad for them, I'm really excited." Kari said.

"What did you think about potions?" Dave asked Cindy.

"That was my first experience with potions, I like it a lot, and Uncle Charlie's a good teacher." Cindy said, sipping some pumpkin juice.

"I like it too, probably going to be my favorite class." Dave said honestly. "Well, favorite next to Hyper-transfiguration." He added laughing.

Lunch flew by even quicker than any of Cindy's classes. Cindy enjoyed the time she spent with her friends, and secretly wished it would never end.

"Hey, look at this." Hannah said, as they walked passed the bulletin board on their way to Defense Against the Dark Arts.

"What is it?" Madison asked.

"A final list of who can attend the Hyper-transfiguration class. There are only fifteen names on this list; I thought you said your whole class volunteered?" Hannah asked confused.

"We did, maybe they needed parental consent and couldn't get it." Kari surmised.

"Yeah, maybe," Madison agreed.

"There's the bell, we'd better get to class." Cindy warned.

They slowly made their way to class. Since this was the first of two classes they had as a group, they laughed and joked the entire way there.

"I am Viktor Krum, I vill teach you to defend yourselves." Professor Krum started in his most heavily accented voice. "Ve vill begin with blocking, so I need a volunteer, Potter, up here." Krum said.

Cindy rose from her seat, and walked slowly to the front of the room.

"Take out your vand." He commanded, and Cindy did as she was told.

"I vill hit you with jelly legs, you block it." He explained.

Krum hit her square in the chest, and she fell quickly to the floor.

"You didn't even try, do it again." He commanded, with the same results, he hit her, and she made no attempt to block, or even get out of the way. "Vhat is dis, didn't you hear me, let's do it again, and ve'll do it until you get it right." He said.

"A word Professor," McGonagall's voice rang out through the classroom.

"Yes Professor," Krum asked as he made it out into the hallway, and closed the door behind him.

"I thought I told you not to use the Potter girl for any exercises." McGonagall said angrily.

"I vill use who I think is best." Krum said defiantly.

"Is that a fact Professor, perhaps being sacked would show you that you should use whom I think is best, or perhaps we should inform Mr. Potter of your obvious prejudices." McGonagall warned.

Krum's face hardened, he knew better than to challenge McGonagall or Harry in such a way.

"I apologize Professor; I shall do as you say." Krum conceded, as he walked back into his classroom. "Potter, sit down, you don't know vhat you are doing, fifty points from Gryffindor." Krum commanded.

When Cindy made it back to her seat, all her friends gave her sorrowful looks that told Cindy they understood.

Cindy struggled through the rest of class; she had no desire to be there, and wanted desperately to leave. The short class seemed to

go on forever, but when the bell finally rang, she leapt out of her seat, and practically ran for the door.

"I thought you said you killed six Death Eaters?" Kari asked in a concerned voice.

"I did." Cindy answered shortly.

"Than why didn't you do anything to Krum?" Kari pressed.

"Because I'm not allowed to, I'm not allowed to use any magic I learned before school." Cindy explained her situation.

"Magic you learned before school?" Hannah asked as she caught up.

"My dad taught me magic when I was younger, he forbade me to use it until it's been taught here." Cindy continued.

"But Krum deserved it." Kari argued.

"I won't disobey my dad." Cindy said, more to herself than to Kari.

Cindy walked in a daze to her next class, Divination. She had been looking forward to seeing her Aunt Peggy since she arrived at Hogwarts. Her spirits lifted slightly.

"Ah, my first years, please come in." Peggy beckoned them inside. "I am Professor Weasley, I'm sure most of you have already been taught by some member of my family or another, so I won't bore you with my life history. I do want to point out that despite what other divination teachers may say, anyone can learn most of what we teach here at Hogwarts, it's a simple discipline, that like most others, just requires concentration and determination, so sit back and relax, and enjoy the class." Peggy said.

Peggy began by teaching the background information of the Tarot cards. The class listened intently as she described what the various cards meant, and how to interpret them. The class ended on the six of cups.

"Ok class, for homework I would like you to read the first chapter of 'Tarot, the Divine Answer' for tomorrow." Peggy called out to the class as they left. "Oh, and Miss Potter, a word please," she added to Cindy.

Peggy waited until the class left before addressing Cindy.

"I heard about Krum, you did the right thing." Peggy said smiling.

"Aunt Peggy, I really wanted to hurt him, he was trying to get me to fight him." Cindy said in tears.

"I know, I think he wants to see what you can do, so if you do nothing, he gets nothing." Peggy explained.

They hugged for just a moment.

"Ok, you'd better get to class; you're going to be late." Peggy said smiling, Cindy just turned to leave. "Oh, and Miss Potter, fifty points to Gryffindor," Peggy added, making up for the points Krum took away.

When Cindy entered the new Astronomy classroom, all thoughts of Krum and his behavior went away. The classroom was monstrous, with a rounded ceiling displaying all the constellations from every possible view.

"Good, now that we're all here, let me take a moment to introduce myself, I am Mike Martin from across the pond. I have been teaching for many years and in many places, but this will be the first time I actually teach in a controlled classroom environment, I hope you'll all bear with me." The blonde haired, blue eyed Californian said, rising from his chair. "As you can see, the ceiling has been enchanted to show you all the constellations from every angle around the world. I have also enchanted it to show you the night sky during several key moments in history, I hope to have a fun year, as I expect you all do, so let's get busy." The tall man said in his American accent.

Cindy enjoyed the class very much, she never had time to marvel at the wonder of the night sky, and Professor Martin was an excellent teacher, Cindy suspected she would be learning quite a bit from him.

The class ended too quickly for Cindy, as did her following class, Care of Magical Creatures. Hagrid had somehow managed to acquire a griffin, and a unicorn, and was planning on teaching the proper care of both creatures throughout the year.

When Magical Creatures finally ended, Cindy and the rest of her friends went quickly to dinner, so that they would have time to attend the first Hyper-transfiguration class with Professor Granger. They were more excited about that one class, than about anything else in the school.

They, along with the remaining ten students, all arrived fifteen minutes early for the class. Being that this was considered an extracurricular activity, they were free to come and go as they pleased, but none would ever do so.

“Good evening.” Hermione said as she entered the classroom, seeing them all present.

“Good evening Professor.” They class said in unison.

“Ok, so as you all must have noticed, not all of your parents approved our little lesson plan, so fifteen guinea pigs are all I have to work with.” Hermione said merrily.

The group took their seats. They all sat in the front of the classroom, eager to hear everything their Professor had to say.

“Now, let me quickly outline what you will be learning, and when. First: this year you will learn how to be one animal, for most of you, this will be the toughest of all, you will learn how to transfigure your bodies from the shape of a human, to the shape of an animal of your choosing. All I ask is that you NOT choose a magical creature. They are the hardest of all, and would take many years to accomplish, not to mention it would hinder your progress with the rest of the class. For those of you who are already an animagus, you will assist me in teaching the rest of the class.” Hermione explained.

“I thought you had to be registered to be an animagus, the youngest person registered currently is you Professor.” Hannah said knowingly.

"Ah, but you must not know about Ministry Decree number 77, which states any wizard under the age of sixteen need not register until after he or she has become a fully qualified wizard or need not register for reasons of Wizarding National Security." Hermione argued.

"I don't remember that decree, when was it written?" Hannah asked.

"About five years ago, it was written so that any parent who taught their children how to transform to keep them safe from Voldemort, would not get into any trouble for doing so." Hermione said.

"So are any of us an animagus?" Kari asked, now interested.

"Yes, one of you is," Hermione said, but didn't need to continue any further.

"What kind of animal are you?" Dave asked Cindy.

The class all turned to see Cindy turn a wonderful shade of scarlet.

"Why don't you just show them, it would save me the trouble of doing it myself." Hermione recommended.

Cindy walked to the front of the class, and in an instant, a beautiful white unicorn was standing in her place.

"A magnificent creature; isn't she?" Hermione said, stroking her long mane.

Cindy changed back and took her seat.

"You're a magical creature." Kari said, surprised her best friend was an animagus.

"One of only three people that I know of who were able to transfigure to a magical creature." Hermione added.

"Who are the other two?" Madison asked.

"The first is of course Cindy's father; Harry, the other was none other than Tom Marvolo Riddle, or Lord Voldemort as you know him." Hermione answered.

The class gasped at the thought of Voldemort as a magical creature.

"Next year," Hermione interrupted the gasps. "You will learn how to become, not just the animal you'll choose, but any animal, at will." The class started to grow ever more excited. "Year three you will learn how to transfigure yourself into a specific inanimate object of your choosing. Then in year four you will learn how to transfigure into any inanimate object you choose." The class started to whisper excitedly again. "In your fifth year, you will learn how to transfigure into multiple animals, such as a swarm of bees, or army of ants, that kind of thing." Hermione explained.

"Does that mean you think with several different brains?" Hannah asked, intrigued by the prospect.

"Actually, no, you think in a collective mind, basically it's like growing four new arms, and having to train yourself into using your new extremities in tandem." Hermione explained happily.

Again the class started whispering excitedly.

"In year six, you will learn how to transform into multiple inanimate objects, such as a ream of parchment, or a box of quills." Hermione continued.

"Are you able to think as an inanimate object?" Hannah kept up her barrage of questions.

"Yes actually, you can see and hear but not move or speak." Hermione answered happily.

"How can you do this if you have no brain, or eyes or ears?" Madison asked.

"It's a different kind of thinking and seeing and hearing, it's almost like sensing everything, it's rather difficult to explain, just wait and see, you'll love it." Hermione said. "And finally, in year seven, you'll learn

how to transform yourself into a combination of animate and inanimate objects, such as a bird and its cage or a swarm of bees and a box of quills, giving you the ability to see and hear in several places at once." Hermione finished.

"Are there limitations to how much you can divide yourself?" Kari asked.

"Good question, yes there are, you are constantly limited by your own mass, you can only separate yourself into enough living and inanimate objects as would equal your size and shape." She said.

The class was now losing all control, the prospect of being able to do all these things, in direct contradiction to what most of them had been taught, was beyond words.

"All right, now the rules; no one in this class discusses what happens in this class, to anyone who does not attend this class, is everyone clear?" Hermione waited until the entire class agreed. "Secondly; no one will transfigure themselves outside of this classroom and not without my presence." Again Hermione waited until they all agreed. "And lastly, you all agree to be cursed if you break any of our rules." Hermione waited until the last person agreed, then waved her wand over the class. "There, now you're all bound by your agreement." Hermione added.

The students all looked at each other for changes, but didn't see any.

"Ok, that's enough for today; we'll start simple transfiguration tomorrow same time and place, good night." Hermione said, leaving the classroom, and leaving the students to wonder what kind of curse she put on them.

"That was the best; I can't wait to get started." Kari was saying to Cindy.

"Me too, I guess this is why my dad really wanted me to come to Hogwarts." Cindy said confidentially to Kari.

"What do you mean?" Kari asked.

"Well, as you probably guessed, I've been learning magic since I was five, I know more than any student here at Hogwarts, but my dad thought I should come anyway." Cindy explained, careful not to tell her she knew more than most of the teachers.

"Cool, my dad wanted to teach me when I was young, but my mum would not allow it." Kari said sadly.

"At least we get to have fun together." Cindy offered.

"Yeah, and fun we're going to have." Kari agreed, shaking Cindy's hand.

That night, before Cindy went to bed, she took a few moments to do something she had resolved not to do, talk to her father.

"Dad, can you hear me?" She said in her head. Dad, can you hear me?" She repeated.

"Of course I can my daughter, how was your first day?" Harry asked.

"Mostly good, I just wanted to thank you for allowing me to come to Hogwarts, there's so much I still need to learn, Hyper-transfiguration, regular Transfiguration, History of Magic, Potions, Astronomy, Divination and Care of Magical Creatures. I thought magic was just spells and charms." She said in her own mind.

"I know Cindy, and I want you to learn everything you can. I heard about Krum, you did the right thing, I wanted you to know that." Harry consoled his daughter.

"Thanks dad, but I really wanted to fight back." She explained.

"Don't worry honey; I'll take care of Krum, sooner or later. But, if he ever puts you in such an uncomfortable position again, you do what you feel is right" Harry said.

"Whatever I feel is right?" She verified.

"Whatever you feel is right." Harry reiterated.

“Good night daddy.” Cindy said.

“Good night Cindy, I love you.” Harry added.

“I love you too.” Cindy said, before falling right to sleep.

“Tomorrow will be a great day.” She thought to herself as she drifted off.

## **Chapter 7 – Burying the Hatchet**

Ginny sat with Petunia Dursley discussing distribution of Ginny's new maternity line of clothing. Petunia had become Ginny's most valued employee, she would spend twelve to eighteen hours every day at the main factory barking out orders, and ensuring all delivery quotas were met.

"You seem anxious," Petunia observed.

"Oh, I'm sorry, I'm visiting with my mother this weekend, she's been teaching at Hogwarts now for two weeks," Ginny lied.

"Is it your mother you're anxious to see, or is it Cindy?" Petunia asked knowingly.

Ginny smiled at Petunia, "you do know me, don't you?" Ginny asked.

"Well, we have been spending quite a large amount of time together over the last two weeks, besides, you're not that difficult to read." Petunia said smiling.

Ginny stared at her for a moment, her smile was warm and genuine, her tone pleasant and inviting, this could not be the same person who practically tortured Harry when he was young. Or maybe she just needed an identity all her own, and not just Mrs. Vernon Dursley.

"Petunia, I've been wondering something." Ginny started.

"Harry," Petunia asked knowingly.

"Yes, I've heard quite a bit from him, and you don't seem like the same person he used to describe." Ginny said honestly.

"May I confide in you?" Petunia asked tentatively.

"Of course, whatever we discuss stays between us." Ginny assured her.

"I have always been jealous of my little sister, she was always better in school than I was, better at games than I was, and more popular

than I was. When we heard she was a witch, and my parents became even prouder of her, well, I became insanely jealous. So naturally, when she died and we ended up with Harry, my jealousy transferred to him, I didn't really hate him, like I'm sure he thinks; I was just jealous. So we made him wear clothes that would get him laughed at, treated him like a servant instead of a family member, we did, I mean, I did everything in my power to make sure he would never be popular, and hopefully, never be a wizard, I was wrong. We treated him like dirt, we did everything short of physical harm to ruin his life, I wish I could go back and change it, but I can't, I'll have to live with it for the rest of my life." Petunia paused in retrospect.

"Don't feel bad, believe it or not, Harry forgave you, all of you, that's why he made sure Vernon and Dudley were given excellent jobs, that's why he invited you all into his life again, but more importantly, it made Harry the man he is today. I'm not sure what you did was such a bad thing; it taught him humility, kindness towards the less fortunate, generosity, and most importantly, how to love. As bad as you may feel, it may be unwarranted; you probably gave him more than you could ever understand." Ginny explained.

They both sat there quietly, both attempting to understand the other's words, then Petunia looked up at Ginny with tears in her eyes.

"Tell Harry I'm sorry." Petunia said simply.

"Tell him yourself, at dinner tonight." Ginny said smiling.

"You want me to fly all the way to Scotland tonight?" Petunia asked disbelievingly.

"Oh no, we have a house here in Belize, it's on a small peninsula on the mainland." Ginny clarified.

"Magical or regular, I mean, what's the word, oh yeah, muggle?" Petunia asked, falling over her words.

"Well, it's magical; we have elves as servants, portraits that move, and the occasional ghost. But I can ensure neither you nor Vernon see any of them." Ginny assured her.

"What if I didn't tell Vernon, maybe I could meet some of these elves, and ghosts?" Petunia asked expectantly.

"You want to see them? I don't see a problem, but are you sure you don't want to tell Vernon?" Ginny asked.

"Yes I'm sure, I'll bring Dudley, he's become quite fascinated with the magical world ever since he started courting that witch." Petunia said.

"You know about that?" Ginny asked.

"Of course I do, Dudley told me almost as soon as he was dating her, though we haven't met yet, I think maybe Dudley's ashamed of her." Petunia said smiling.

"Ashamed, she's a stunning woman, you should see them together, you'd be proud." Ginny corrected her perception.

"Then I'll ask Dudley to bring her along too, that way I can meet her." Petunia stated.

"Great plan, I'll let Harry know this afternoon, and we'll meet tonight. If you like, I'll have the company car pick you and Dudley up at seven, and have Parvati apparate to the house." Ginny offered.

"That sounds great, I'll see you then." Petunia said standing and leaving Ginny's office.

"Well, that was weird." Ginny said to herself.

"Hey handsome," Parvati said as she stepped into Dudley's office.

"Why you sexy thing, come closer so I can fondle you properly." Dudley said smiling.

The two kissed deeply, and then Parvati sat on Dudley's desk.

"So, what brings you and that extremely short skirt over to Belize?" Dudley asked, looking up Parvati's skirt.

"Looking for something?" Parvati asked playfully.

"I'm always looking for some." Dudley said, choosing his words carefully.

"Really, what a coincidence, so am I," Parvati said provocatively.

After another brief kiss, Parvati decided to tell Dudley the reason for her visit.

"I was just talking to Ginny, apparently she and your mother had a heart to heart, and she was invited to dinner at the Potter's Belize home tonight." Parvati began.

"Really, my mum had a heart to heart with someone, how odd." Dudley said smiling.

"But that's not all; your mother asked if I could be invited, she wants to meet me." Parvati said nervously.

"My dad would flip if he found out." Dudley said, sounding like a scared boy.

"That's just it, she doesn't want your father to go, she just wants the three of us." Parvati clarified.

"Really, my mum wants to go to a magical house with just her son and her son's magical girlfriend?" Dudley asked for clarification.

"Exactly, she wants to see more of the magical world than she's been exposed to." Parvati explained.

"This will definitely turn into an interesting evening, how are we meeting?" Dudley asked.

"Well, you and your mother are being picked up by Ginny's company limo, and I'm just apparating to the house." Parvati answered.

"Well, put on your Sunday best, I think we'll be in for a long night." Dudley said before taking his girlfriend into another deep kiss.

Cindy and her friends had just finished Hyper-transfiguration on their second Thursday of the school year. Just as they were packing to leave, Cindy heard her teacher call for her.

"Cindy, may I see you in my office?" Hermione asked politely.

"Yes ma'am." Cindy said, as she walked towards the office door.

Cindy entered and closed the door behind her. She had been called so often over the last two weeks into teacher's offices, that it had become almost a routine.

"Grandma," Cindy exclaimed as she saw Molly standing in the office.

"Cindy dear, how are you?" Molly asked, taking Cindy in a crushing embrace.

"Well, I'll leave you two alone." Hermione said, and left the office through the secret passage.

"How have your first two weeks been?" Molly asked as she sat down.

"Great, how about yours?" Cindy asked back.

"I haven't had this much fun in a long time." Molly said smiling.

The two spent the next thirty minutes recapping the previous two weeks. Cindy spoke of the hyper-transfiguration classes, and Molly spoke of the various potion disasters that had happened in her class.

"There is another reason why I'm here." Molly said reluctantly.

"What is it?" Cindy pressed.

"I'm meeting your mother this weekend in Hogsmeade." Molly explained.

Cindy's face fell. "And I'm not allowed to go?" She asked tentatively.

"No, I'm sorry dear, school rules, first years aren't allowed off school grounds, and are not allowed visitors unless it's a family emergency." Molly said sadly.

"So my mom will be so close, and I can't see her?" Cindy asked, tears starting to form in her eyes.

"I'm sorry, but I wanted to tell you so you wouldn't get any ideas about leaving the school to see her." Molly explained.

"I can't go with a teacher?" Cindy continued.

"Not at all dear, I'm sorry. But I do want you to promise me you won't try to leave the school this weekend." Molly said.

"I promise I won't try to leave the school." Cindy said dejectedly.

"Good, now how about a cup of tea before bed?" Molly asked, summoning a pot of tea and crumpets.

The two sat for another half an hour before Cindy went off to the Gryffindor common room. She spent the better part of the evening thinking of ways to circumvent her promise to her grandmother. Cindy felt it was an imperative to see her mother while she was in town.

"Ginny, I only did those things to make them disappear, I didn't actually forgive them." Harry told Ginny as they discussed that night's dinner.

"You should have heard her Harry, she's truly sorry." Ginny argued.

"I don't give a damn if she spends the next year crawling through broken glass as penance, I will never forgive that woman, or any of her family." Harry said emphatically.

"What about Dudley, surely you'd forgive him, especially now." Ginny continued.

"No, if you ask me too, I'll pretend to forgive them, but it will only be an act, I will NEVER forgive them." Harry said, making it clear his position.

"Fine, if that's the way you're going to be, pretend, don't ruin my night because you can't find it in your heart to forgive." Ginny exclaimed, storming out of the room.

"I'll never understand women, not as long as I live." Harry said to himself as he returned to work.

"We're not that difficult to understand Harry." He looked up to see Gabrielle in the doorway.

"Did you hear the argument; she wants me to forgive the Dursley's for the hell they put me through." Harry explained to Gabrielle.

"So why can't you?" Gabrielle asked in her lovely French accent.

"I've told you what they did to me as a child; I could never forgive such acts." Harry said, throwing his inkbottle across the room.

"You're acting like a child Harry, you've forgiven other people for far worse, you just don't WANT to forgive them." Gabrielle argued.

Harry stared at her with his bright green eyes unable to understand when Gabrielle had become so intuitive.

"Maybe you're right, maybe I don't want to forgive them, but it is my choice, and no one has the right to ask me to forgive them when I choose not to." Harry said calmly.

"You're wrong Harry, Ginny has the right." Gabrielle said as she grabbed the documents off Harry's desk she had come in for.

Harry was unable to work the rest of the day, he decided to take a ride into town to distract him from the argument he had with Ginny.

Harry jumped into his Bentley, and set off for town. An hour later, he found himself in the local church on the outskirts of town.

"Harry, how are you? We never see you here any more." A priest said, shaking Harry's hand vigorously.

"I'm sorry Father Brian, but I never seem to have time to visit." Harry said apologetically.

"That's all right; you certainly take care of us in other ways." Father Brian said, motioning to all the construction in the church.

"I was wondering if we could have a talk." Harry asked eager to talk to a disinterested third party.

"Of course Harry, would you like to use the confessional?" Father Brian asked.

"Um, no, just a small chat in the garden would be fine." Harry said as they both headed for the doors.

"What's on your mind?" The priest asked.

"Forgiveness," Harry said vaguely.

"Are you sure you don't want to use the confessional?" He asked Harry again.

"Oh yeah, I'm sure, it's not me that needs forgiveness, it's me who needs to forgive." Harry clarified.

"Go on Harry." Father Brian beckoned him.

"Two years ago we talked about where I grew up, all the nasty things my foster parents did to me, well, my wife wants me to forgive them, and I'm not sure I can, or want to." Harry said in one breath.

"A dilemma indeed. Do you feel they should be tortured?" The priest asked.

"Tortured? Of course not." Harry answered.

"Then why torture them? Don't you see Harry, our mistakes define who we are, but if we are never forgiven for them, they end up weighing heavily on our souls, they torture and torment us. Whether or not you forgive your family is entirely your decision, but think of the impact on everybody's lives, they may end up hating themselves for the rest of their lives, your children may never truly know them, and you Harry, you'll carry this hate around you like weights, slowing you down, eating at your soul. I'm not going to tell you what to do, just think about it carefully before you make a decision." Father Brian explained.

"Thanks Father, I'll think about what you said." Harry said, shaking the priest's hand.

"Come by more often Harry, we'd love to see you." He told him.

"I'll see you Sunday at the castle." Harry said, ignoring Father Brian's statement.

"Good bye Harry, drive safe, and God be with you." Father Brian added, as Harry left.

After a brief stop off at the local pub, Harry set off for home. He was still unsure what he was going to do, but he felt much better after speaking with Father Brian. He drove home as fast as the law would allow, and made it in time to find Ginny preparing the twins for the trip to Belize.

"And where were you?" Ginny asked shortly.

"In town, I went to see Father Brian." Harry answered with no malice in his voice.

"Did he tell you the same thing I did?" Ginny asked, softening a bit.

"Pretty much, but I still don't know." Harry said honestly.

"Well, get ready, we'll meet you in Belize." Ginny said, taking the twins by the hands and apparating to their home in Belize.

Harry stood staring at the place Ginny had been standing, he still could not figure out what he should do, and now the time was upon him.

"I should have gone to see Sirius, he would have understood." Harry said aloud to himself.

"No, he would have agreed, but he wouldn't have understood." A voice corrected him.

"Michael, what are you doing here?" Harry asked as he embraced his old friend.

"Ginny called me; she thought maybe I could talk some sense into you." Michael said, embracing Harry as a brother.

"You know what they did to me all those years, you know how much I hate them, how could I ever forgive them?" Harry asked, longing for a voice of reason.

"You already have forgiven them." Michael said suddenly.

"WHAT? I have never forgiven them." Harry said emphatically.

"Oh but I beg to differ, if you hated them with even half the passion you claim to, you would have killed them a long time ago. You would have opened a fissure in the ground and had them and that damn house swallowed up, they would already be dead. You not only did not kill them, you gave them jobs, and homes, and cars, and justified it by saying it was for your betterment, you have already forgiven them Harry, you just haven't realized it." Michael explained.

Michael's words caught Harry by surprise, had he actually forgiven them already, had all this hate he claimed to have for them been nothing more than self delusion, Harry just stared at his old friend.

You're thinking about it aren't you, you know I'm right, you may not have entirely forgiven Vernon, but Petunia and Dudley you forgave a long time ago." Michael continued.

"I thought you'd be on my side." Harry said sadly.

"I am on your side, but you're still wrong. You are like a brother to me, I would never let something so trivial eat you up like this, but I'll tell you what, why don't you go on hating them, don't forgive them, see what happens. I have made my fair share of mistakes, and no matter what anyone would have told me, I still would have made them, so go, make your mistakes, and maybe next time I offer you my council, you'll accept it." Michael added as he vanished from sight.

"That was uncalled for." Harry said, as he made his way to the bedroom to change for dinner.

Cindy had been mulling over how to see her mother without breaking the promise she made to her grandmother. Her two Gryffindor friends had not yet returned from the general common room where they were enjoying the company of the others. Cindy was about to give up and go to sleep when Madison and Dave walked in through the portrait hole.

They immediately sought out Cindy and went over to her.

"So what was the meeting all about?" Madison asked as she sat down by the fire place.

"My grandmother wanted to see me. She told me my mother was going to be in Hogsmeade this weekend." Cindy said, sounding melancholy.

"Are you going to get to see her?" Dave asked.

"No, my grandmother made me promise not to leave the castle." Cindy responded.

"That sucks, your mother is right in town and the school won't let you see her." Dave said what Ginny was feeling.

"And I really want to see her too, but I don't want to break my promise to my grandmother." Cindy added.

"What exactly did you promise?" Madison asked.

"Not to leave the castle." Cindy said.

"Well, it's easy then, make your mother come here. Don't you have an owl?" Dave asked.

"Yeah," she responded doubtfully.

"Then write to your mother and have her stop by, it's easy." Dave said smiling.

"Dave, you're a genius!" Cindy exclaimed and hugged Dave happily.

"I am, now you have to convince Krum." Dave said jokingly.

"Yeah, like he'd believe me." Cindy added sarcastically.

Cindy got up from her chair and proceeded to the exit.

"Wait, where are you going?" Madison asked.

"To the owlry." Ginny said in an obvious tone.

"It's after curfew." Madison argued.

The realization of the time was only a slight setback for Cindy; she ran up to her room, rummaged through her belongings and ran back down the stairs.

"What do you got there?" Dave asked as Cindy ran passed.

"My dad's old map, my Uncle Ron gave it to me." Cindy said unrolling the parchment and saying; "I solemnly swear that I am up to no good" and the map came to life with minuscule dots representing everybody in the school and its surrounding grounds.

"Oh cool, we could have so much fun with that thing." Dave said longingly.

"Oh no we can't, Cindy, you know better than to leave the common room after hours, even with that thing." Madison berated her.

"Oh, I'm just going to the owlry, I'll be back in a few minutes." Cindy assured her, and then ran for the door once again.

Once outside the door, Cindy used one of the things her father had taught her as a little girl, she became invisible, including the map.

She turned towards the direction of the owlry, and began to walk quietly.

The trip up was completely uneventful; she did not encounter anybody along the way. She quickly made herself visible, and began writing a note for her mother. Hedwig, seeing Cindy for the first time in almost two weeks, flew straight down to her shoulder.

"Hello girl, you ready for a job?" Cindy asked while she wrote.

The owl hooted happily, she had begun to get bored sitting in the owlry with nothing to do.

Cindy attached the note to Hedwig's leg, and sent her on her first mission.

"Go straight to mom, I need her to get this as soon as possible." Cindy told the owl, who just hooted her understanding.

Cindy was about to open the door to leave, when she heard voices. She quickly made herself invisible, checked the map, and then made the map invisible.

Two dots were moving into the owlry, one labeled Viktor Krum, the other labeled Conan Conner. Cindy pushed herself into the farthest corner and waited.

The door opened slowly and the two entered quietly.

"Here, now we can talk." Viktor said.

"Professor Krum, I know our master wants us to keep an eye on them, but there's no way I can do that, they are all first years, it would look too suspicious." Conan said.

"Ze master does not care, your job iz to vatch zem, I expect you to do so." Krum said angrily.

"But Professor, how?" Conan asked exasperatedly.

"I don't care, just do it." Krum yelled and exited the owlry.

"Stupid Bulgarian, if the master didn't need you, I'd take care of you myself." Conan said to himself as he walked out of the room.

Cindy used that opportunity to follow Conan to see what other mischief he was up to. She followed him around the castle, he did not seem to be walking to anywhere in particular, he just kept wandering around.

Cindy was starting to grow tired of the spy business, and was about to leave when she heard another voice call to Conan.

"Where have you been?" Conan asked the man in the shadow.

"That is none of your concern boy, you are being followed." The man in the shadows said.

Cindy froze with fear, could this man actually see her standing there.

"By who, I've been checking, I haven't seen anybody." Conan said angrily.

"That's because you only see with your eyes, see with your ears as well, I've heard footsteps following you for the last twenty minutes, and though they've eluded me, I know they are around." The man whispered.

"Whatever, do you have my orders?" Conan asked.

"You know boy, playing both sides of the field is dangerous, especially for someone your age." The man said, handing Conan a piece of parchment.

"You might think so, but I expect to be fully paid, from both sides." Conan said taking the parchment.

"Oh, I have a feeling you'll get yours." The man said, before leaving the shadows.

Cindy almost gave herself away when she saw what came out. "A vampire." She thought.

Conan left right after he looked at the parchment, and Cindy wasted no time getting back to the common room.

She removed the invisibility charm when she was at the portrait of the fat lady, gave the password, and entered.

The only students left in the common room were Madison and Dave.

"Do you realize what time it is, we've been worried you got caught." Madison said in a motherly tone.

"I'm sorry; I think I need to go to bed." Cindy said, not wanting to tell her friends about the incident with Krum, Conan and the vampire.

"What's up with her?" Dave asked Hannah.

"I don't know, but we'll find out tomorrow. Good night Dave." Madison said, following Cindy to their dorm.

Petunia and Dudley Dursley exited the company limousine, and proceeded to ring the doorbell of the Potter's winter home in Belize.

"Now mum, be on your best behavior, I like this girl a lot." Dudley told his mother.

"Don't worry Dudley dear, I'll be nice." She assured him.

The door was answered by a tall, imposing man in his late twenties, wearing wizard's robes, and a threatening look.

"May I help you?" The man asked.

"Petunia and Dudley Dursley." Petunia said regally.

"This way please." The man said, opening the door wider.

"Petunia, Dudley, welcome." Ginny greeted them with a kiss on the cheek.

"Wow, this house looks so much smaller on the outside." Dudley said looking around.

"It is, it's been magically enlarged on the inside, it's about four times its original size." Ginny explained.

"This is so cool." Dudley said, taking off his jacket.

"Has Parvati arrived yet?" Dudley asked.

"Not yet, she's due in ten minutes, please come into the drawing room while we wait." Ginny said, motioning to the room adjacent to the entryway.

The three made their way inside, they sat on a group of four chairs that faced each other.

"So, what do you think?" Ginny asked Petunia.

"Well, I like the idea of having a home this large inside a building a quarter of the size it should be. But everything else seems normal." Petunia said, looking around.

"Have you looked at the portraits?" Ginny asked, as Petunia's eyes fell on the portrait of Albus Dumbledore who removed his hat and bowed.

"Oh my, that is strange." Petunia said nervously.

"I'm sure it takes some getting used to, but I find them rather fascinating." Ginny said.

"And what of these servants, these elves?" Petunia asked.

"Oh Gimmel!" Cindy called out to the room.

Immediately a small, plump elf appeared right next to Ginny.

"Yes madam?" Gimmel asked.

"Gimmel, these are our guests, this is Petunia and Dudley Dursley." Ginny introduced him.

"Please to be making your acquaintance." The little elf said cordially.

"Hello there." Petunia said tentatively.

"Are you a real elf?" Dudley asked, still amazed by the magical world.

"Yes Master Dudley, I is." The elf responded.

"Thank you Gimmel, that'll be all." Ginny said, dispatching the elf to his work.

"Is he the only one?" Petunia asked.

"No actually, there are five elves who work for us at this location; he's just the head elf." Ginny explained.

At that moment, the fireplace sparked to life, and a large green flame shot up. A moment later, Parvati Patil appeared in a rather conservative dress, and her hair pulled back in a bun.

"Parvati, welcome, I see you used the floo network." Ginny said, as she stood to greet her guest.

"I was a little too nervous to apparate, I brought wine though." Parvati said, handing the wine to her hostess.

"Please, come meet our guest of honor. Or would you prefer to introduce them?" Ginny asked Dudley.

"If you don't mind, yes. Mum, this is Parvati Patil, Parvati; this is my mum, Petunia." Dudley said nervously.

"I am very pleased to finally meet you Mrs. Dursley." Parvati said tentatively.

"As am I Parvati, Dudley's told me quite a bit about you, as a matter of fact, you are all he talks about." Petunia said, sounding a little cold.

"Let's open the wine." Ginny said, to break the momentary silence.

"Good idea." Petunia agreed.

The four sat down and began to drink the wine Parvati had brought.

"So, where is Harry, I was hoping to talk to him." Petunia said in between sips.

"He must not be ready yet, he was working late." Ginny lied.

"I understand, he must be very busy." Petunia added somewhat coldly.

"Hello there." Gabrielle said, walking into the room.

"Ah, Gabrielle, come in." Ginny beckoned her. "Parvati, Petunia, Dudley, this is Gabrielle, Harry's ward." Ginny said merrily.

"Harry's ward?" Petunia asked.

"Yes madam, my parents died when I was still under age and Harry took me in as his ward, now I run his magical concerns, but tonight I'm just the baby sitter." Gabrielle explained.

"I don't understand what magical concerns?" Petunia pressed.

"All of Harry's magical business." Gabrielle clarified.

"What type of businesses?" Dudley asked, now interested in the subject.

"Oh, there are quite a few, he owns professional sports stadiums, many stores, restaurants, he owns a broom manufacturing plant, an art studio, vast real estate holdings, oh the list is endless." Gabrielle explained.

"Wow, does it earn him much money?" Dudley asked.

"Not as much as his muggle concerns, but more than enough to still call him filthy rich." She answered.

"I've heard about some of Harry businesses, I didn't know you ran them for him." Parvati said skeptically.

"Oh yes, Harry has been spending the majority of his time on his muggle businesses, he leaves Gabrielle to handle all the magical concerns, and of course her brother in law handles all the finances, for both muggle and magical businesses." Ginny added smiling.

"Isn't that dangerous, leaving one family to take care of all his money?" Petunia asked.

Ginny smiled. "No, because its Harry's brother in law too, my brother Bill, who's married to Gabrielle sister Fleur." Ginny said almost in a laugh.

"Is everybody related to everybody else in the magical world?" Petunia asked flabbergasted.

"No, just in our little corner of it." Ginny said laughing out loud.

"There is too much glee in this room." Harry said, walking in with the twins in tow.

"Harry, good to see you cousin." Dudley said walking up to Harry and embracing him, Harry reciprocated.

Harry passed all the others and went straight to Petunia.

"Welcome to my home." Harry said warmly.

Petunia stood and hugged Harry also. "Thank you for having us Harry." She said, kissing him once on each cheek.

"Dinner is served." Gimmel said.

"Let's eat." Dudley said happily taking Parvati's hand. Somehow Harry's presence made Petunia seem a little less intimidating.

"May I speak with you a moment Harry?" Petunia asked as the rest made their way into the dining room.

Harry stole a quick glance at Ginny who gave him a hard look. "Of course Aunt Petunia." Harry said, conveying no emotion.

"I don't know what Ginny has told you, but I wanted to apologize for all those years of torment we visited upon you. I know forgiving us is probably out of the question, but for Ginny's sake, can we try to act as family?" Petunia said in a genuinely apologetic voice.

"Petunia, for so many years I've harbored hateful feelings toward you and Vernon, and Dudley, but somehow, I cannot maintain those feelings any longer, you are still my mother's sister, my blood relative,

you I can forgive, your son Dudley, who is also my blood relative I can forgive, but as much as I want to, I could never forgive Vernon, I've tried reasoning with myself and there's just no use, I will always hate that man, and though I am civil towards him, it's only because he's married to you, and he's Dudley's father, I hope you will one day forgive me for not forgiving him." Harry said honestly.

"Harry dear, you need never ask for my forgiveness, I will be forever in your debt; I just hope I can make it all up to you." Petunia said, a lone tear running down her face.

"There is something you can do for me, I want you to give Dudley your blessing about Parvati, I've heard rumors about the two of them, and nothing would make them happier than you happily giving them your blessing." Harry said.

"They'll have my blessing. And not because you asked me to give it, but because I'm starting to understand my prejudices, and I will overcome them." Petunia added, kissing Harry on the cheek.

"Dinner?" Harry asked.

"Indeed." Petunia agreed.

As the two entered the dining room, Harry took his place at the head of the table and Petunia took her place next to Ginny and across from Parvati.

"So Parvati, Dudley hasn't told me what you do for a living." Petunia said, fishing for the answer.

"I work for Ginny's brother Ron; I'm in charge of public appearances for his professional sports team." Parvati answered.

"Does it pay much?" Petunia pressed.

"Mum, that's rude." Dudley pointed out, but was ignored.

"I'm paid quite handsomely; it works out to be a quarter million Euros per year." Parvati said proudly.

"Do you want children?" Petunia asked, spooning mashed potatoes into her mouth.

"Mum!" Dudley exclaimed, but was again ignored.

"Yes Mrs. Dursley, I do." Parvati said, trying desperately not to get flustered.

"How many children," Petunia kept up her interrogation.

"Three." Parvati answered shortly.

"What is your religion?" She continued.

Ginny was starting to get worried, and if she thought looking to Harry for help was a viable course of action, she was sadly mistaken. Harry was sitting back in his chair, as happy as Ginny had ever seen him.

"Catholic," Parvati continued using one word answers.

"Do you love my son?" Petunia asked calmly.

Dudley was about to protest but found he could neither speak nor move.

"Yes." Parvati said shyly.

"Do you want to marry him?" Petunia had crossed the line with Parvati; she could no longer contain herself.

"That's it! I can't take it anymore! Yes I love your son, yes I want to marry him, no I'm not a virgin, and YES I am a WITCH!" Parvati screamed.

"Harry could no longer contain his laughter and broke down, Ginny on the other hand was livid, but Petunia seemed unaffected by the outburst.

"Ok, thank you." Petunia said calmly and began cutting her prime rib.

"How's the prime rib?" Harry asked her between fits of laughter.

"Quite good Harry, and I must get the recipe for the mashed potatoes, they are excellent." Petunia said pleasantly.

The rest of the table was stunned by the events, Parvati was still standing from her outburst, and Dudley was finally able to speak and move, but he couldn't find anything to say.

"How's work been?" Harry kept up the small talk.

"Oh, work's wonderful, the plant opened a month ahead of schedule, and we're getting ready to send out our first shipment." Petunia answered smiling.

"Ginny, you didn't tell me you were up and running." Harry said to his wife.

Ginny was brought out of her thoughts by Harry's statement.

"Um, yeah, we managed to open last week." Ginny said distractedly.

"Can I ask something?" Parvati asked, still standing.

"Certainly dear," Petunia said pleasantly.

"What just happened?" She asked confused.

"Nothing happened." Petunia said in a mocked confused tone.

"You attacked me with a barrage of personal questions, and I just screamed at you. Don't you find that strange?" Parvati reworded her question.

"No dear, I don't, I wanted to know certain things about you, of course your virginity was not an issue, and you got tired of answering, sounds like a normal family discussion." Petunia answered, almost causing Harry to topple over with laughter.

"It's not funny Harry." Parvati said angrily.

"You people are so blind, let me tell you what just happened, Petunia wanted to see if you were a strong enough woman for Dudley, you answered her question. She can now give her blessing to your

relationship; you're willing to fight for your man, that's what she needed to know." Harry explained.

"Do you know you've grown into a very intelligent young man Harry?" Petunia asked pleasantly.

"Thank you, that means a lot to me." Harry said smiling, tears of laughter running down his face.

"So do you mum?" Dudley asked.

"What dear, give my blessing, of course I do, she's a wonderful girl, and I wish you both all the happiness in the world." Petunia told her son.

"Whoa, I'm still confused." Ginny piped in.

"Don't worry Ginny; I'll explain it to you later." Harry said in an amused tone.

"Harry, can I have a word with you please?" Dudley asked.

"Sure cousin, let's step back into the drawing room." Harry said standing.

When they both entered, Dudley closed the door behind them.

"What's up Dud?" Harry asked.

"You're like the godfather of the wizarding world. Don't try and deny it, everyone loves you, and those with power value your opinion, I've done my own checking." Dudley began.

"What's your point Dudley?" Harry asked, feeling somewhat impatient.

"I want your permission to ask Parvati to marry me." Dudley blurted out.

"You don't need my permission Dudley, you can just ask her." Harry argued.

"I know I don't need it; I want it. Parvati told me how her parents died, she told me you ensured she was well taken care of, even though you tried to hide your involvement, she still knew. She thinks of you as a godfather, a surrogate father if you will, you are the only family she has left, so allow me to ask again; may I have Parvati's hand in marriage?" Dudley asked formally.

"Dudley, so long as she accepts, you have my permission to marry her." Harry answered formally.

"Thanks cousin, I'll make her the happiest girl in the world." Dudley said, turning to leave.

"Oh Dudley, there is one catch." Harry said before Dudley left.

"What's that?" Dudley asked nervously.

"I want to give the bride away." Harry said smiling.

"If Parvati agrees, and I'm sure she'll insist on it, then I have no problem with it." Dudley replied smiling.

When the two men reentered the dining room, they could have both been knocked over by a feather. Petunia and Ginny were talking animatedly about their weddings, and the various mishaps they'd have over the years.

"Parvati, can I ask you something?" Dudley asked, sitting back down next to her.

"Sure Dudley, anything," she answered smiling.

Dudley immediately dropped on one knee. "Parvati Patil, will you marry me?" Dudley asked pulling the ring he had been hiding out of his pocket.

"Oh my God, oh my God, yes, yes I'll marry you." She answered, hugging Dudley tightly.

"Is this what you meant earlier about having heard things?" Petunia asked Harry in a whisper.

"Sort of, I heard Dudley had been shopping for a ring, I just assumed it was for her." Harry answered.

"I think this deserves a toast." Harry began, motioning for everyone to stand with him. "To my cousin Dudley, and his beautiful bride to be; congratulations from my wife Ginny and me." Harry rhymed.

"Here, here." Ginny agreed.

The last day of the week flew by for Cindy, she was looking forward to seeing her mother that weekend, and her two favorite classes were after school; Hyper-transfiguration and Muggle Defensive Arts.

She and the rest of her friends sped through dinner like locusts; they ate as fast as they could, and then headed for the Transfiguration classroom for their lesson.

Her friends were already able to grow their hair longer and shorter with only minimal discomfort, but still required several minutes to complete.

Hermione entered the classroom and took her place at the front of the room.

"Good afternoon class." Hermione said pleasantly.

"Good afternoon Professor." They responded.

"I've been doing some research and I may have come up with a way to speed you along on your training, but before we begin, I have a little news, I know most of you, that is to say all but David, know Dudley Dursley and Parvati Patil, well, they're getting married." Hermione announced.

"Really, when?" Cindy asked excitedly.

"In the spring, they haven't set the actual date yet, but I hear your father will be giving the bride away." Hermione explained.

"Wow, I hope I'll be able to go." Cindy said longingly.

"I'm sure you will, most of the staff will be going, so I don't see why you can't." Hermione said.

"Professor, I've been wondering, are we on track with our training?" Madison interrupted.

"Actually you're all ahead. Typically after only two weeks, most people are still feeling discomfort when their hair grows." Hermione answered.

"How long did it take you?" Hannah asked Cindy.

"Don't use Cindy as an example; her training was very different than this." Hermione explained.

"Then what about your training, how long did you take?" Madison asked.

"My training was different also, I did all my training in three months, it was very accelerated." Hermione said.

"Than how can we be sure?" Dave asked.

"Because it typically takes two to three years to become an animagus, you're doing it in one." Hermione said shortly.

The answer seemed to be sufficient for them; they all turned and began working on Hermione's new technique.

After only twenty minutes of training, Kari raised her hand.

"Yes Miss Jersey?" Hermione asked.

"Can I ask a question completely unrelated to what we're doing?" She asked tentatively.

"Of course you can, what is it?" Hermione asked back.

"Well, I've been hearing arguments in Romanoff house about wandless magic, is there such a thing?" She asked curiously.

"A lot of teachers do not believe it is, to them it's a myth, a legend, the holy grail of wizard kind, but I believe it is not only real, I believe there are witches and wizards using it every day." Hermione answered.

"I heard Professor Snape and Professor Krum had a heated argument about it, Professor Snape kept saying it wasn't a myth, and Professor Krum kept saying it was, they are both fully qualified wizards, how can they have such a different opinion?" Kari asked.

"Well, what if I were to show you wandless magic, would you believe in it?" Hermione asked back.

"Yes," she said without hesitation.

"Then there's your answer, Professor Snape has probably seen it with his own eyes, and Professor Krum probably has not." Hermione explained.

"Have you ever seen it?" Madison asked.

"Yes, many, many times." Hermione answered without question.

"Can anybody do it?" Dave asked.

"Yes." Hermione answered.

"Can anybody show us?" Hannah added to the questioning.

"No. Only those skilled enough in wandless magic can teach it. As a matter of fact, I know dozens of people who can do it, and only a select few can teach you." Hermione said, not mentioning any names.

"Can you teach us?" Madison asked, knowing who at least one of them was.

"I, unfortunately, do not have that kind of time." Hermione answered.

"Is there anybody in this school?" Madison pressed.

"I know of two other people." Hermione said mysteriously.

"Professor Snape and who?" Kari asked, figuring he would have been one.

"Me." Cindy said.

## **Chapter 8 – Talents and Abilities**

The class turned to stare at Cindy; none could believe what she had just said.

“Did you just say; you?” Madison asked, disbelievingly.

“Yes,” Cindy said simply.

“Can you show us?” Dave asked.

“No, I’m not allowed.” Cindy answered.

“Why?” Kari asked.

“Because it’s such a rare gift,” Hermione began, “so rare in fact, that if anyone found out, Cindy would probably be removed from Hogwarts and become a permanent resident guinea pig of St. Mungo’s.” She said.

“So why would anyone tell us?” Hannah asked.

“Because you’re all bound by the oath of secrecy, you can’t tell anyone.” Hermione explained.

“Can’t,” a student named Richard asked.

“Can’t, every time you try, you’ll simply forget what you were going to say. I found the spell in an ancient book in the restricted section of the Hogwarts library.” Hermione answered, sounding all too proud of herself.

“Cindy, can you teach us?” Hannah asked longingly.

“I’m not supposed to use wandless magic.” Cindy reiterated.

“But you won’t be using it; really, you’ll just be showing us how to use it.” Hannah argued.

“I don’t know.” Cindy said, trying to think if this would violate her promise to her dad.

"Leave her alone, if she wants to, she'll teach us all, if not, forget about it." Kari said, in a warning tone.

"Exactly," Hermione said standing. "Now, back to training." Hermione instructed, ending the discussion.

"Mum," Ginny said, hugging her mother tightly as she entered the Three Broomsticks.

"Ginny dear, how are you feeling?" Molly asked as she stared at Ginny's belly.

"Good, not much morning sickness this time." Ginny said smiling.  
"How was your first two weeks?" Ginny asked back.

"Oh Ginny, it's been the best time I've had in a long time." Molly said.

"Any problems with the students, other teachers, anything?" Ginny asked.

"No problems at all, it's been perfect." Molly answered.

"Good, now I need to ask you a very important question." Ginny said to her mother as she poured them both butterbeers. Molly just nodded. "Was my daughter seriously barred from coming to see me?" Ginny asked in a dangerous tone.

"Ginny dear, the school can't make exceptions to its rules for just one student." Molly explained.

"So you went to see your granddaughter just to make her promise not to leave the school grounds, knowing full well all she had to do was apparate here for an hour or two, then apparate back." Ginny said more than asked.

"Yes dear." Molly said.

"And was this your idea, or Minerva's?" Ginny continued.

"Minerva's, why would you think it was Minerva's?" Molly asked back.

"You're avoiding the question, did she send you?" Ginny asked again.

"Yes Ginny, she did." Molly said honestly, not wanting to lie to her daughter.

"In the morning, I'm going to apparate to Hogwarts, I'm going to spend the morning with my daughter, and then I'm going to go see McGonagall and give her a piece of my mind. We all went into this arrangement knowing full well of Cindy's talents and abilities, and I will not allow her to use Cindy's grandmother as a controlling tool simply because you work there." Molly was about to interrupt, but Ginny just raised her voice slightly. "Furthermore, if my daughter needs to come and see me, than neither Minerva nor anybody else will interfere with it, and if Minerva has a problem with it, I'm sure the board of governors will be happy to straighten her out." Ginny declared.

Molly was struck dumb by Ginny's ramblings, she had never heard her daughter so angry, so protective of her family, and more importantly, she had never heard Ginny threaten to use her fame and power to harm anybody else, and removing Minerva from the position of Headmistress would harm her more than the death.

"Um Ginny dear, I think you need to think about what you are saying, you never had any preferential treatment, I never received any, Harry didn't even receive any, why should Cindy?" Molly asked, hoping to get Ginny to see the logic.

"Because Cindy is the next generation of wizard, she can do things most wizards have only dreamed of, and Cindy needs the best of everything, and when Arthur and Molly come to Hogwarts, they too will deserve this preferential treatment, and when this child is born, and she attends Hogwarts, she will also receive it." Ginny stopped when she saw her mother's face. "What?" She asked.

"It's going to be a girl?" Molly asked.

"Oops," was all Ginny said in response.

"What are you going to name her?" Molly asked expectantly.

"I'm not sure, either Margaret, after Peggy or Lily, after Harry's mother." Ginny said, angry with herself that she had told anybody.

"I vote for Lily, Harry named the twins after your father and I, well you should name her after Harry's mother." Molly offered her opinion.

The topic change to the new baby was just what Molly was looking for, a way to defuse the situation with Ginny; hopefully she would calm down and not do as she threatened to do.

Harry was sitting in his London office; Bill was recapping the week's events.

"And Black Motors showed a one percent decrease from last week, which means all your businesses are down." Bill was saying. "Harry, are you listening to me?" Bill asked.

"Oh, sorry Bill, I was distracted." Harry answered smiling.

"Is there something wrong?" Bill asked concernedly.

"I'm not sure, I sense something's wrong, but not with the family, nothing really evil either, more like..." Harry never got to finish his sentence; someone came barging into the office.

"Harry," Gabrielle exclaimed. "I have it." She added.

Bill looked at Harry who just shrugged.

"What do you have?" Harry asked, almost amused.

"The answer," she said, handing Harry a piece of parchment.

Harry quickly read through the note and a few moments later, looked up at his two most valued employees.

"We have a problem." Harry began.

"What is it?" Bill asked.

"You said all our businesses are down." Harry verified.

"Yeah, substantially," Bill agreed.

"We now know why." Harry said, handing the note to Bill, who in turn read it even quicker than Harry. "THEY are the ancient race I've been hearing about; apparently I'm stepping on too many toes." Harry said, not sounding concerned.

"The Nosferatu?" Bill asked.

"I had heard there was an old race, an organized crime syndicate, if you will, who would brutally kill anyone who interfered with their businesses. I just didn't expect this." Harry said, motioning to the note.

"Are you going to go?" Gabrielle asked.

"Of course, they did take the time to invite me." Harry said, still sounding unconcerned.

"Harry, they're vampires, they can't be trusted." Bill argued.

"No, maybe not, but if they are the elite of the business world, then I want to meet with them." Harry said calmly.

"The meeting is the thirtieth of September, is there anything you need?" Bill asked.

"No, I'd rather go there in a friendly manner, I don't want them thinking I'm smarter or wiser than they think I am. Remember, to them, I'm just another wizard." Harry pointed out.

"I don't think Ginny will like this." Gabrielle added.

"Then don't tell her, besides, she doesn't need anything upsetting her in her delicate condition." Harry said jokingly.

"There are two words I thought I'd never hear in the same sentence, Ginny and Delicate." Bill joked.

"Seriously, let's keep this meeting to ourselves, if for no other reason, than to show these Nosferatu that we are not concerned with them." Harry ordered.

Ginny awoke early on Saturday morning; she had been staying in her loft above the Three Broomsticks. If her mother thought that changing the subject the night before would, in any way, convince Ginny not to go to Hogwarts, she was seriously mistaken.

She dressed quickly and called for one of her cars, she had resolved the night before to arrive by limousine rather than by apparition.

Ginny instructed one of her most trusted magical secretaries to call the Headmistress ahead of time to announce Ginny's intended arrival, she wanted it clear to McGonagall that Ginny had a lot more political power than just being the daughter of the Minister of Magic or the wife of Harry Potter.

When she arrived at Hogwarts a few minutes later, Ginny was met by the Deputy Headmaster; Severus Snape. He was donning his typical black robes and trousers, only this time, Ginny noticed, they were of her design.

"Severus," Ginny said, embracing him lovingly and kissing him on each cheek. "Where's Peggy?" Ginny asked, looking around.

"She's inside with Charlie and Molly; they'll be waiting for you in the staff room once you're finished with the Headmistress." Severus explained as he herded her towards the castle doors.

The two walked up to the Headmistress' office without saying another word. Severus was about to give the password as they approached the statue that guarded the stairs leading to McGonagall's office, but as it turned out, the statue moved of its own accord.

"A trick of Harry's?" Severus asked emotionlessly.

"No, the castle just knows me." Ginny answered matter-of-factly.

"Perhaps you'll explain that to me one day." Severus said as he motioned to McGonagall's door.

"I will." Cindy said as she knocked on the large oak door.

"Come in," a voice said from the other side.

"Minerva," Ginny said, not as warmly as McGonagall was used to.

"How wonderful to see you again; Ginny." Minerva responded, shaking Ginny's hand.

Neither one conveyed the friendship they once felt towards each other.

Ginny sat when McGonagall motioned to the chair opposite her desk, she wasted no time, and dove into what was bothering her.

"Minerva, I was concerned when I heard you wouldn't allow Cindy to come to see me in Hogsmeade, I thought there was an understanding between us." Ginny said somewhat coldly.

"Ginny, please understand, we agreed to treat Cindy as any other student, and I would never allow another first year to leave the castle, supervised or unsupervised." McGonagall said evenly.

"Yes, but we also agreed not to inhibit her natural growth, and if she's to grow as both a person and a witch, she should be allowed to consult her parents, and besides, she could just apparate away, and you would never know about it." Ginny added, almost as a threat.

"I'm sorry Ginny, I just can't allow her to be treated differently than any other student, and besides, I would know immediately if she left the castle." McGonagall added, with almost the same threatening tone.

Ginny gave a small laugh.

"Oh Minerva, if you only understood how things really worked in the world. You think this castle will inform you if Cindy leaves? Well, you're wrong; this castle is loyal to its champion, and the champion's family, that's why Severus didn't need the password to allow me to your office, the statue jumped out of the way on its own." Ginny said in an amused tone. "Furthermore" she added, leaning in close. "You will do as I request, or you'll have me to deal with, I will not stand for my daughter being denied her mother simply because you have some antiquated view on how to run a school. And let us not forget, I know the entire governorship of this school, they are either friends or

family, don't ever think I won't become vindictive, I am not Harry." Ginny said, standing at once.

The Headmistress had no words, it was evident she had never been spoken to in such a way. She just watched as Ginny turned towards the door that opened of its own accord.

"I'm off to see my daughter; you can try and stop me if you like." Ginny said as she left the room.

It took McGonagall another ten minutes to recover from the verbal attack from Ginny. McGonagall didn't know whether to cry or scream, but she definitely would not accept it.

"She said what," Arthur asked the head of McGonagall that was sticking out of his office fireplace. "I can't believe it, she would never, she was always such a perfect girl." Arthur said, more to himself than to McGonagall.

"I'm sorry Minister, but I had to tell you, you are her father." McGonagall added.

"Thank you Minerva, I'll talk to her immediately." Arthur said, ending the discussion.

"Talk to who, dad?" Fred asked, entering his father's office.

"Your sister, evidently she threatened McGonagall because she wouldn't let Cindy go meet her in Hogsmeade." Arthur answered distractedly.

"Really, tell me everything." Fred said excitedly as he sat opposite his father.

Arthur explained the entire story to his son; Fred just sat riveted to his seat as his father spoke.

"Wow, Ginny's turned into one dangerous witch." Fred said amusingly.

"It's not funny Fred, Minerva's the Headmistress of Hogwarts, she should never be spoken to that way." His father admonished him.

"Oh dad, come on, this is Ginny we're talking about, you don't think she would really get McGonagall sacked, do you?" Fred asked, scarcely believing Ginny would.

Arthur looked directly into his son's eyes. "Yes Fred, I do, that and much more." Arthur said quietly.

"Are you going to tell Harry, she is his wife?" Fred asked, now sounding concerned.

"I'm not sure; it might cause friction between them." Arthur answered honestly.

"Or worse, Harry could side with Ginny." Fred added nervously.

His father just looked at him, that particular thought hadn't occurred to him.

"Mommy," Cindy said, running up to Ginny and hugging her tight as she entered the Gryffindor common room.

"And how's my little sweetheart?" Ginny asked, hugging her back.

"Fine, I was hoping you'd come." Cindy said with tears in her eyes.

"How could I not, if only to see how you're doing. How has school been?" Ginny added, lightly stroking Cindy's hair.

"Good, I didn't know there was so much magic to learn." Cindy said excitedly, realizing for the first time how much she really enjoyed school. "How's dad?" Cindy asked.

"He's fine; he's been very busy with work and all, but just fine." Ginny said softly.

"And the twins?" Cindy added.

"Annoying as always." Ginny joked. "Let's go somewhere where we can be alone." Ginny added, looking at all the Gryffindor's staring at them.

"Ok." Cindy agreed, as they both turned towards the portrait hole.  
"Mom, can I ask you something?" Cindy asked.

"Of course baby, anything." Ginny agreed smiling.

"How did you get into the common room?" Cindy asked curiously.

"The fat lady just let me in, no password needed." Ginny said as they made their way down the hall.

"Why, I thought everyone needed a password?" Cindy added.

"Well, I explain it like this, your father and this castle have a connection, it lets him do what he wishes and go where he wishes, and now, that's transferred onto us." Ginny explained.

"Oh, I know about that, I've been able to go wherever I've wanted to since daddy started bringing me here as a kid, but I didn't know it would allow you to go somewhere the headmistress wouldn't allow." Cindy explained.

"And what makes you think the Headmistress didn't allow me in Gryffindor tower?" Ginny asked her eleven year old daughter.

"Grams told me yesterday." Cindy said simply.

Ginny's blood boiled only for a moment at the thought of her mother interfering, but it passed as they reached their intended destination; the old DA common room.

Mother and daughter spent the remainder of the day held up in the old DA common room, where they knew no one would find them. Cindy told Ginny about all her classes, and especially about hyper-transfiguration. Ginny told Cindy about the clothing business, how things were going, how Petunia was finally coming around, they enjoyed their stolen afternoon.

Ginny arrived back at Lee Castle on Sunday night. She didn't really expect to find Harry and the twins home, but called out to them just the same. When she received no response, she went straight to the dining room for a small meal.

When she walked into the dining room, she almost jumped back, sitting at the head of the table was one of the last people she expected to see, her father.

"Daddy, what are you doing here? Is everything all right?" Ginny asked concernedly.

"That's funny Ginny; I came here to ask you the same question." Arthur said, standing to greet his daughter.

Ginny knew immediately what this was about.

"Ah, you spoke to Minerva." Ginny said knowingly.

"Ginny, you can't go around threatening people like that. Everyone knows you're famous, everyone knows your family is rich and powerful, you don't need to remind them. And you certainly don't need to threaten them with your fame and power." Arthur explained.

"Daddy, I love you, but if anybody stands in the way of me seeing MY daughter, than they do so at their own peril. I will not sit idly by, while some insignificant witch with antiquated views tells ME I'm not allowed to see my daughter." Ginny said angrily.

"Ginny, please be reasonable, Minerva has always been a good woman, she has always been on our side, she was even in the Order of the Phoenix, she has never been insignificant. And she would never do anything to place any of her students in danger." Arthur pleaded.

"Sorry dad, I did and said what I thought was right, and neither you nor anybody else will convince me otherwise." Ginny added firmly.

"Ginny please, don't turn this into you and me, this is about you and Minerva." Arthur said calmly.

"No dad, you listen, I'm tired of being treated like a child, if I want to go off half cocked on some miserable old woman, than so be it, neither you nor anybody else has the right to try and stop me. And if one day soon, I decide to run for Minister of Magic against my father,

because he does not agree that the headmistress of Hogwarts is..."  
Ginny was cut off by a voice from behind her.

"Arthur, will you excuse us?" Harry asked, walking into the room.

"Of course Harry, good night Ginny." Arthur said calmly.

"I suppose you're going to take his side." Ginny spat at Harry.

"No Ginny, I don't care what words you and Minerva had, I don't care whether you went to see Cindy or not, and I really don't care if you decide to execute your power and get Minerva sacked, what I do care about is the way you just threatened your father. I care that the man I love as a father is being treated like dirt, I care that you're turning into something different. I care about you." Harry said, going from angry to sincere.

Ginny felt ashamed, not about Minerva, but about her father.

"I'm sorry Harry, but I'm just still wound up about McGonagall, I guess I just took it out on dad." Ginny said honestly. "You really don't care that I went to see Cindy against McGonagall's wishes?" Ginny asked.

"No, and let me point something out; if I made a conscious decision to go see my daughter, there is no force in the universe that will keep me from my task, not even Minerva McGonagall. I don't care what you said to her, and I don't care if you say it a thousand times more, just leave your family out of it, even if they try to get involved in it." Harry explained, hugging Ginny for the first time since he entered.

"Can I ask you something Harry?" Ginny asked.

"What is it?" Harry asked curiously.

Ginny slapped Harry on the head. "Why haven't you told me about hyper-transfiguration?" Ginny asked angrily.

"You've never wanted to know about my extracurricular activities before." Harry said defensively.

"But this, this is huge, changing into various animate and inanimate objects, I want to be able to do that." Ginny said jealously.

"Ok, we'll talk; just don't hit me in the head again." Harry said, rubbing the spot where Ginny hit him.

The morning of September 30th found Harry sitting in his London office preparing for the meeting with this group; the Nosferatu. They had been interfering with Harry's muggle and magical expansions for over two months, but it was only recently that he had discovered their identity.

The meeting was set for noon; Harry found that to be a strange time, considering the group was comprised of vampires, creatures who inherently slept during the day.

"Are you sure you don't want anyone going with you, this could be dangerous?" Gabrielle asked, concerned for her employer.

"They requested my presence alone; I think they are just testing my fortitude." Harry said without looking up.

"Do you know what they want?" Bill asked nervously.

"No, but I have my suspicions." Harry answered calmly.

"We should call Ron." Bill blurted out.

"No we shouldn't, I don't think we need to involve the Dark Aurors when we don't even know if this group is a threat." Harry explained.

"But we won't know until you're dead." Gabrielle argued.

Harry finally looked up from his desk, and surveyed his two most trusted associates.

"Do you both really have such a lack of faith in me, in my abilities? I can take care of myself, regardless of how many vampires there are, don't worry, I'll be home soon." Harry said, looking at his watch.

"It is now noon; Mr. Potter should be here any moment." A younger vampire said, addressing a seemingly older one.

"And I am." Harry said entering from the door directly in front of a row of thirteen thrown-like chairs on an altar.

"Interesting trick, wizard, we have quite a few wards on our chambers to prevent wizards from visiting unexpectedly." The eldest vampire in the center of the 13 chairs said.

"Well, I find wards to be such a nuisance, and they tend to hinder my schedule." Harry responded calmly.

"Perhaps the rumors are true, is there an educated wizard who has powers none of the ancients know?" The vampire just to the right of the leader said aloud.

"Perhaps they are Raphael, perhaps they are." The eldest spoke again, and then turned to Harry. "So, Mr. Potter, we have heard quite a lot about you, but evidently, not enough. Oh, how silly of me, I am Jonas; I am the leader of the Nosferatu." Jonas said in a most pleasant manner.

"And I am Harry Potter, just a simple wizard." Harry said modestly.

"Now come, come, Mr. Potter, I've heard of your great deeds, don't be modest. I hear you are the most powerful wizard on the planet, is this true?" Jonas asked.

Harry thought about how he should answer, and decided humility would be best.

"I am but a simple wizard, but please Jonas call me Harry." Harry said calmly.

Jonas stared right into Harry's eyes, attempting to gauge the wizard. "Thank you Harry, I will, I prefer to refer to people in the familiar." Jonas said, expressing no emotion.

"May I ask why you have invited me here?" Harry asked.

"Ah, direct and to the point, I like that. Let me first explain who we are; we are the Nosferatu clan of the ancient vampires, we have devoted our lives to the acquisition of money. Unlike those monsters that plague the night, we are driven by our desires to succeed and not our desires to feed. With that goal in mind, we have asked you here to discuss your recent business transactions. You have been making quite a large sum of money, both in the magical and muggle communities, this has interfered with some of our legitimate; and not so legitimate enterprises, so much so, that you have become somewhat of a nuisance." Jonas said calmly.

"Well, as they say, business is business." Harry said smiling.

"Yes it is." Jonas said chuckling. "But, you have cost us millions, more millions than I'd care to mention." He added.

"And I presume you have a proposition for me?" Harry asked.

"Very good Harry, we do," a seemingly younger vampire handed Jonas a file folder.

"We propose that you give us twenty five percent of all your earnings, in return for which, we will provide the following services: 1) we will protect your investments physically, 2) we will provide contacts that you would have never thought of, 3) we will allow you to utilize our existing businesses at no charge, and 4) we won't kill you or your family." Jonas added the last one with a smile.

"A protection racket, Tony Soprano would be pleased, but unfortunately, I am no simple business owner, you cannot threaten me, or my family. And if you ever interfere with my endeavors, or threaten my family again, I will return here and personally run a stake through your hearts." Harry said, his tone never rising above friendly.

"I don't think you quite understand Harry, this isn't an offer, it's a mandate." Jonas explained.

Harry lost all semblance of politeness as he rose from the chair, his eyes were more yellow than anyone had ever seen, even Voldemort.

A loud crack was heard in the room, and a split second later, every vampire had a wooden stake floating ten centimeters from their chests.

"I have a counter offer, how about I give you nothing, and you agree to stay out of my way?" Harry said maliciously.

Jonas stood rooted in place; here was a wizard capable of magic he had never seen. "I think we have an understanding, for now. But make no mistake; we shall revisit this issue at a later date." Jonas finally said.

"For now? Let's hope for your sake, it's for ever." Harry said, turning towards the door.

"Oh and Harry," Jonas began as Harry reached the door, "can you dispatch these stakes, they tend to make us nervous." Jonas asked, not sounding nervous at all.

Harry leered only for a moment before the stakes vanished.

Instantly Harry was gone.

Jonas turned to the other vampires.

"We will need to watch this one; he may be more trouble than he's worth." Jonas announced.

"Especially if he sides with one of the other, larger clans," an older female vampire agreed.

The Sunday afternoon Hyper-transfiguration class had just come to a close. Cindy and her friends were cleaning up the mess they had made during the class. The class had managed to be able to make all their hair and nails grow and shrink instantly, at will.

Kari was talking animatedly about her new and exciting talents when Dave turned to Cindy.

"Show us wandless magic." He said pleadingly.

"I'm not supposed to." Cindy said sadly.

"Yeah Cin, show us." Maddy agreed, and the others egged her on.

"Ok, but something quick, what do you want me to do?" Cindy asked Dave.

"Oh, I don't know; how about you clean up a little using wandless magic." He recommended.

"Ok." Cindy said, and then quickly waived her hand at the room, and all the furniture was righting itself, the cushions were flying into their trunks, the broken chairs and tables were mending themselves, and Cindy's friends were struck speechless.

"Um, um, I thought you were just going to move a pillow or something." Dave said in awe.

"Oh, sorry, I thought you wanted me to clean the whole room." Cindy said sheepishly.

"Wow, you have to teach us that." Kari said, still staring at Cindy.

"I agree." Madison said.

"Me too," Hannah agreed.

"I'm not sure I know how to teach, I've only shown my brother and sister." Cindy said worriedly.

"Your brother and sister can do this too?" Madison asked.

"Not this much, but a little." Cindy explained.

"Well, how did you teach them?" Kari asked.

"I'm not sure, I just kept showing them, and telling them to concentrate, just like my daddy used to do for me, and they just started." Cindy continued.

"Then we'll do the same, what do you say guys?" Kari asked the group, who immediately agreed.

"Ok, how about after Hyper-transfiguration class every evening, we'll practice concentrating at first, and then we'll move on to trying to move things." Cindy said, finally feeling sure of herself.

"Agreed," Kari said.

"Can I ask something?" Dave asked, and the group turned to face him.

"What?" Cindy asked.

"Is that the only kind of magic you can do without a wand?" He asked curiously.

"No." Cindy answered without elaborating.

"No? What else can you do?" Hannah asked.

"Well, everything, I can do all magic without a wand." Cindy said, hoping her friends didn't think she was a freak.

"All magic, like charms and curses and spells?" Kari asked for clarification.

"Yes, all magic, well, all magic that would normally require a wand." Cindy clarified.

"Are you going to teach that too?" Dave asked, trying to hide his hopefulness.

"I guess, it kind of all ties together." Cindy answered.

"Anything else you want to tell us?" Madison asked.

"Not right now." Cindy answered, starting to feel uncomfortable with the interrogation.

"Leave her alone now guys, I think we're pushing." Kari said to the group.

Harry walked into his office and sat down behind his desk. He quickly removed a blank piece of parchment from his top drawer and began to write feverishly.

Bill and Gabrielle walked in shortly after Harry had, and sat across from him, they said nothing.

"I need the best operatives we have." Harry said to them without looking up.

"That would be Neville and Luna; no one knows they even work for you." Bill said without hesitation.

"Gabrielle, go to your office, call Neville and Luna, tell them I need to see them now." Harry commanded.

"Yes Harry." Gabrielle said as she rose from her chair.

Bill hadn't seen Harry like this in many years. He was unsure how to approach him, but luckily it was Harry who spoke first.

"These vampires are businessmen; they're as ruthless in business as their brothers are in feeding. They wanted twenty five percent of all my businesses." Harry said without looking up.

"What did you say?" Bill asked tentatively.

"I told them they'd get nothing." Harry answered calmly.

"So we're going to war?." Bill said more than asked.

"No; not yet. We came to an understanding while I had wooden steaks floating in front of them. Right now I need Neville and Luna to find out some information first, before I re-confront them." Harry said, looking into Bill's eyes.

"You're going to fight them, aren't you?" Bill asked.

"Eventually. I doubt they'll just step aside for me, these vampires have been in business for too long to easily lay down for someone the likes of me, but I need fuel for this fire." Harry answered.

As if on cue, Neville, Luna and Gabrielle entered the office.

Harry smiled wider than he had in months.

"Neville, Luna, I'm so glad you could come by." Harry greeted them warmly as he hugged both of the Longbottoms.

"What's going on Harry?" Neville asked, not waiting for Harry to finish hugging Luna.

"I need you both for a mission, you up for it?" Harry asked, knowing full well they would be.

"You don't have to ask us Harry, we'll do whatever you want." Luna said, using her sing-song voice.

"I want you both to research the vampire hierarchies, there is one group that I know of; the Nosferatu, but I want to know about all the others. I want to know who is allied with whom, I want to know who is disputing with whom, and most importantly, I want to know where to contact them." Harry explained.

"Should we begin with the princess?" Neville asked, referring to R.J.

"No, I don't want her associated with me at the moment. She's teaching at Hogwarts, if they find out about our friendship, it would put the school in danger." Harry continued.

"When do you want us to start?" Luna asked.

"As soon as you can," Harry said without hesitating.

"Then we'll start tonight." Neville said, thrusting out his hand towards Harry.

Harry took Neville's hand. "Thank you old friend, but please be careful, you'll be dealing with very ruthless people." Harry warned.

"We'll be careful." Luna said before kissing Harry lightly on the lips.

"I'm sorry everybody, but my daughter needs to speak to me." Harry announced after getting a strange look on his face.

"We understand." Gabrielle said, ushering the rest out the door.

Harry waited until they were all out the door, and then closed his eyes.

"Yes Cindy," Harry asked inside his own mind.

"Daddy, I need your help, my friends want me to teach them wandless magic, and I don't know what to do." Cindy said.

"Start by explaining how magic really works, just like I did when I first adopted you. Then move on to the concentration exercises I taught you, and only after they have become experts in concentration do you move on to actually teaching them wandless magic." Harry explained to his daughter.

"Thank you daddy, um dad, you're not upset that I told them about the wandless magic, are you?" Cindy asked tentatively.

"No, that was my idea, I had Severus pick an argument with Krum, and I had Hermione put you into that position. I wanted you to be honest with your friends, they are good people." Harry said honestly.

"Oh thank you daddy, we'll talk soon, I'm starting to fall asleep." Cindy announced before actually falling to sleep.

Harry smiled in spite of himself; everything was going according to plan. Everything that is, except the Nosferatu.

Ginny was standing naked in front of her bedroom mirror when Harry walked in. She seemed to be examining her very pregnant belly.

"Now that's how I expect to see my wife when I come home." Harry announced as he snuck up behind her.

"I'm getting huge Harry, look at me, I'm a fat cow." Ginny said sadly.

"Yes, but you're my fat cow." Harry said playfully.

Ginny turned and gave Harry an affectionate kiss.

"I've been getting very moody; I wasn't this moody with the twins." Ginny said softly.

"No you weren't, but that doesn't mean anything, you're just worried." Harry consoled her.

"Harry, I've been very nervous about this baby, I don't know what it is, I just feel very worried." Ginny said seriously.

"I'm sure it's nothing, when was the last time you went to a doctor or healer?" Harry asked.

"Two weeks ago, but I have an appointment with the muggle doctor tomorrow." She answered.

"Well why don't you wait until tomorrow to worry, that way when the doctor says everything is fine, I can pick on you." Harry said smiling.

"Ok Harry, I'll wait, but this time you're coming with me to the doctor." Ginny almost commanded.

"Oh good, I love watching another woman work on you while you're strapped to stirrups and naked from the waist down." Harry said playfully.

"Men," was all Ginny said before getting into her nightgown.

"What, you used to love being tied down naked with another woman around to play with." Harry added as she walked into the loo.

Harry fell asleep with his hand on Ginny's stomach; this seemed to relax them both.

"What do you think about these Nosferatu?" Gabrielle asked Bill.

"They're bad news; I have a very bad feeling about them." Bill said.

"So do I, but we have to trust Harry, he's never failed us." Gabrielle added.

"At least not yet," Bill added seriously.

"Harry's like a father to me, you know that, I love him more than he could ever understand, and if these vampires become a problem, I'm going to be at his side until the end." Gabrielle confided in Bill.

“Me too,” Bill agreed.

